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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Amos

Introduction to Amos

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Amos

Amos introduced (1:1)

Yahweh judges the nations (1:2-2:16)

- The surrounding nations (1:2-2:3)
- The southern kingdom (2:4-5)
- The northern kingdom (2:6-16)

Amos prophesies against the people of Israel (3:1-6:14)

Yahweh shows Amos several visions (7:1-9:10)

Israel is to be restored (9:11-15)

What is the Book of Amos about?

The Book of Amos contains the words of Amos, a shepherd of Tekoa. Amos began to prophesy about 760 BC. He spoke Yahweh's messages against God's people behaving wickedly. He spoke messages to both the southern kingdom of Judah and the northern kingdom of Israel. (See: [evil](#), [wicked](#), [unpleasant](#))

Yahweh gave Amos prophecies of judgment (Chapters 1-6) to proclaim to the people. Each of them begins with the phrase "This is what Yahweh says" (ULT).

Three visions of Yahweh coming to judge the people are in the last part of the book (7:1-9:10). A final vision promises that Yahweh will restore Israel (9:11-15). He will restore the "tent of David." This means a descendant of David would once again be king over Israel.

How should the title of this book be translated?

The traditional title of this book is "The Book of Amos" or just "Amos." Translators may also call it the "The Book of the Sayings of Amos." (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Who wrote the Book of Amos?

The prophet Amos probably wrote this book. He lived in the southern kingdom of Judah. Amos came from a poor family. They grew sycamore trees (7:14, 15) and were shepherds (Amos 1:1). Though Amos was not trained as a prophet, he knew and understood the law of Moses. Also, Amos skillfully used expressive and meaningful words.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How is justice described in Amos?

Justice is an important theme in the Book of Amos. Justice means people treating others fairly according to the law of Yahweh. People in Israel were oppressing and taking advantage of poor people, orphans, and widows. Amos explained that Yahweh would prefer that the people act justly rather than sacrifice to him. Truly obeying the law of Moses meant being just to other people. (See: [just](#), [justice](#), [unjust](#), [injustice](#), [justify](#), [justification](#) and [law](#), [law of Moses](#), [law of Yahweh](#), [law of God](#))

What is a lawsuit?

Many cultures have a process for resolving disputes through the use of courts. These legal disputes are called lawsuits. Amos uses various legal terms. Part of the book presents events in a courtroom. The people are introduced, the problem is explained, the people are examined, witnesses speak, and a verdict is given.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What is the meaning of the term “Israel”?

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

Where do the various narratives begin and end?

The structure of the Book of Amos may make it difficult to understand where Amos ends one thought and begins another. It may be helpful to solve these issues with carefully divided lines or paragraphs.

Amos 1

Amos 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This book is written in a poetic form. Because it was written by a farmer, it includes many references to agricultural concepts.

“For three sins of Judah, even for four”

The phrase “For three sins of Judah, even for four,” is used to begin each oracle. This is not intended to be a literal count but is an idiom indicating a large number of sins. (See: [Idiom](#) and [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#))

Amos 1:1

General Information:

God speaks through Amos using poetic language. (See: [Poetry](#) and [Parallelism](#))

These are the things concerning Israel that Amos, one of the shepherds in Tekoa, received in revelation

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "These are the things concerning Israel that God revealed to Amos, one of the shepherds in Tekoa" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

These are the things

Alternate translation: "This is the message"

in Tekoa

"Tekoa" is the name of a town or village. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

He received these things

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God gave him these things" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and also in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel

The words "in the days of" is an idiom and refers to the time when each king reigned. Alternate translation: "when Uzziah was king of Judah, and also when Jeroboam son of Joash was king of Israel" (See: [Idiom](#))

two years before the earthquake

The assumed knowledge is that the original hearers would be aware of when a large earthquake had affected the area. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Amos](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [king of](#)
- [king of](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [Jeroboam](#)
- [son of](#)

ULT

¹ The message of [Amos](#), who was among the shepherds in Tekoa, which he saw concerning [Israel](#) in the days of Uzziah [king of Judah](#), and also in the days of [Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel](#), two years before the earthquake.

UST

¹ This is the message that Yahweh gave to [Amos](#). He was one of the shepherds near the town of Tekoa south of Jerusalem. He received this message about [Israel](#) in a vision two years before the big earthquake. It was when Uzziah [was the king of Judah](#) and [Jeroboam son of King Jehoash, was the king of Israel](#).

Translation Words - UST

- to Amos
- Israel
- Israel
- was the king of
- was the king of
- Judah
- Jeroboam
- son of

Amos 1:2

Yahweh will roar from Zion; he will raise his voice from Jerusalem

These two phrases share similar meanings. Together they emphasize that Yahweh shouts loudly as he prepares to judge the nation. (See: [Parallelism](#))

Yahweh will roar

The author speaks of the voice of Yahweh as if it sounded like the roar of a lion or the roar of thunder. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Yahweh

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

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [from Zion](#)
- [will wither](#)
- [the top of](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [from Mount Zion](#)
- [When that happens...will dry up...because Yahweh will order the rain not to fall](#)
- [the grass on top of](#)

ULT

² He said, “Yahweh will roar [from Zion](#); he will raise his voice from Jerusalem. The pastures of the shepherds [will wither](#); [the top of Carmel](#) will dry up.”

UST

² Amos said: “Yahweh will shout very loudly; when he speaks [from Mount Zion](#) in Jerusalem, his voice will sound like thunder. [When that happens](#), the pastures where you shepherds take care of your sheep [will dry up](#), and [the grass on top of Mount Carmel](#) will wither [because Yahweh will order the rain not to fall.](#)”

Amos 1:3

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but it indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment.

Damascus

Here "Damascus" represents the people of the city of Damascus. Alternate translation: "the people of Damascus" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. Alternate translation: "I will certainly punish those people" (See: [Litotes](#))

they threshed Gilead with instruments of iron

Yahweh speaks of how Damascus treated Gilead as if they had threshed grain with iron tools or weapons. (See: [Idiom](#))

Gilead

Here "Gilead" represents the people of the region of Gilead. Alternate translation: "the people of Gilead" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [Gilead](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [I will...change my mind about punishing...I will...change my mind about punishing](#)
- [to the people of the region of Gilead](#)

ULT

³ This is what [Yahweh](#) says: "For three sins of Damascus, even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because they threshed [Gilead](#) with instruments of iron.

UST

³ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared regarding the people of Aram: "[I will not change my mind about punishing](#) the people of Damascus, the capital of Aram, because of the many sins that they have committed; [I will not change my mind about punishing](#) them, because of the cruel things that they did [to the people of the region of Gilead](#)."

Amos 1:4

I will send a fire into the house of Hazael

Here Yahweh speaks of his judgment against the house of Hazael as if it were a consuming fire. (See: [Metaphor](#))

the house of Hazael

The word “house” is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Hazael’s descendants, who were rulers of the country where Damascus was located. (See: [Metonymy](#))

it will devour the fortresses of Ben Hadad

Here Yahweh’s judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Hazael ... Ben Hadad

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

Translation Words - ULT

- a fire
- into the house of
- and it will devour

Translation Words - UST

- a fire
- the palace that...built and lived in
- It will consume...also

ULT

⁴ I will send a fire into the house of Hazael, and it will devour the fortresses of Ben Hadad.

UST

⁴ I will cause a fire to burn the palace that King Hazael built and lived in. It will consume the fortresses where his son King Ben Hadad also lived.

Amos 1:5

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on Damascus.

cut off the man

Here to “cut off” means either to destroy or to drive away, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: “destroy the man” or “drive away the man” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Valley of Aven

This is the name of a place that means “valley of wickedness.” This could mean: (1) this is the name of an actual place in that region or (2) this is a metonym for Damascus or the surrounding region. Alternate translation: “the valley of wickedness” (See: [How to Translate Names](#) and [Metonymy](#))

the man who holds the scepter in

This is a metonym for the ruler of that city or region. Alternate translation: “the ruler of” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Beth Eden

This is the name of a place that means “house of pleasure.” This could mean: (1) this is the name of an actual place in that region or (2) this is another metonym for Damascus or the surrounding region. Alternate translation: “the house of pleasure” (See: [How to Translate Names](#) and [Metonymy](#))

Kir

This is the name of a region from which the people of Aram originally came. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [and cut off](#)
- [the scepter](#)
- [in Beth](#)
- [The people](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [I will get rid of](#)
- [rules](#)
- [in Beth](#)
- [The people of](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

⁵ I will break the gate bars of Damascus and cut off the one who rules over the Valley of Aven, and also the one who holds the scepter in Beth Eden. The people of Aram will go in captivity to Kir,” says Yahweh.

UST

⁵ I will cause the gates of Damascus to be broken down; I will get rid of the king of Biqat Aven and the man who rules in Beth Eden. The people of Aram will be captured and taken to the region of Kir.” Yahweh has declared this, so it will certainly happen.

Amos 1:6

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but it indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#).

Gaza

Here "Gaza" represents the people of the region of Gaza. Alternate translation: "the people of Gaza" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#). (See: [Litotes](#))

hand them over to

Alternate translation: "deliver them up to" or "sell them to"

Edom

Here "Edom" represents the people of the country of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [they carried away](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [I will...change my mind about punishing...I will...change my mind about punishing](#)
- [they captured...and took](#)

ULT

⁶ This is what [Yahweh](#) says: "For three sins of Gaza, even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because [they carried away](#) captive a whole people, to hand them over to Edom.

UST

⁶ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared regarding the people of Philistia: " [I will not change my mind about punishing](#) the people of Gaza because of the many sins that they have committed; [I will not change my mind about punishing](#) them, because [they captured](#) large groups of people [and took](#) them to Edom and sold them to become the slaves of the people there.

Amos 1:7

it will devour her fortresses

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [fire](#)
- [and it will devour](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [a fire](#)
- [and also destroy](#)

ULT

⁷ I will send [fire](#) on the walls of Gaza, [and it will devour](#) her fortresses.

UST

⁷ I will cause [a fire](#) to completely burn the walls of Gaza [and also destroy](#) its fortresses.

Amos 1:8

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on Gaza.

cut off the man

Here to “cut off” means either to destroy or to drive away, as one would cut a piece of cloth or cut a branch from a tree. Alternate translation: “destroy the man” or “drive away the man” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the man who holds the scepter

This is a metonym for the ruler of that city or region. Alternate translation: “the ruler” (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will turn my hand against Ekron

Here “hand” represents Yahweh’s power that he would use against Ekron. Alternate translation: “I will strike Ekron” or “I will destroy Ekron” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Ekron

Here “Ekron” represents the people of the city of Ekron. Alternate translation: “the people of Ekron” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- I will cut off
- in Ashdod
- the scepter
- from Ashkelon
- I will turn
- my hand
- the rest of
- the Philistines
- and...will perish
- the Lord

Translation Words - UST

- I will get rid of
- the city of Ashdod
- The Lord
- rules
- in the city of Ashkelon
- I will also strike
- I will also strike
- all the people of...who are still alive
- Philistia
- and...will be killed

ULT

⁸ I will cut off the one who lives in Ashdod and the one who holds the scepter from Ashkelon. I will turn my hand against Ekron, and the rest of the Philistines will perish,” says the Lord Yahweh.

UST

⁸ I will get rid of the king of the city of Ashdod and the king who rules in the city of Ashkelon. I will also strike the people of the city of Ekron, and all the people of Philistia who are still alive will be killed.” The Lord Yahweh has declared this, so it will certainly happen.

Amos 1:9

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#).

Tyre

Here "Tyre" represents the people of the city of Tyre. Alternate translation: "the people of Tyre" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#). (See: [Litotes](#))

their covenant of brotherhood

Alternate translation: "the agreement they made to treat you as brothers"

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Tyre](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [their covenant of](#)
- [brotherhood](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [regarding the people of Tyre...the people of Tyre...the...they...them](#)
- [friendship](#)
- [I will...change my mind about punishing...I will...change my mind about punishing](#)
- [the treaty of...that they had made with your rulers](#)

ULT

⁹ This is what [Yahweh](#) says: "For three sins of [Tyre](#), even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because they had delivered up a whole people to Edom, and they did not remember [their covenant of brotherhood](#)."

UST

⁹ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared regarding the people of Tyre: "[I will not change my mind about punishing the people of Tyre](#) because of the many sins that [they](#) have committed; [I will not change my mind about punishing them](#) because they also captured large groups of our people and took them to Edom, In doing so, they did not act in accordance with [the treaty of friendship that they had made with your rulers](#)."

Amos 1:10

it will devour her fortresses

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [fire](#)
- [Tyre](#)
- [and it will devour](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [a fire](#)
- [Tyre](#)
- [and also destroy](#)

ULT

¹⁰ I will send [fire](#) on the walls of [Tyre](#),
[and it will devour](#) her fortresses.”

UST

¹⁰ So I will cause [a fire](#) to completely
burn the walls of [Tyre](#) [and also destroy](#)
its fortresses.”

Amos 1:11

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#).

Edom

Here "Edom" represents the people of the country of Edom. Alternate translation: "the people of Edom" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#). (See: [Litotes](#))

he pursued his brother

The assumed knowledge is that Esau, from whom the people of Edom were descended, was the brother of Jacob, from whom the people of Israel were descended. Here "his brother" represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "he pursued the people of Israel" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Metonymy](#))

cast off all pity

Alternate translation: "showed them no mercy"

His anger raged continually, and his wrath lasted forever

These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated to emphasize his continued anger. The abstract nouns "anger" and "wrath" can be translated using the adjectives "angry" and "furious." Alternate translation: "He was continually angry and always furious" (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))

his wrath lasted forever

This is an exaggeration that is meant to express the ongoing nature of his wrath. (See: [Hyperbole](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [he pursued](#)
- [his brother](#)
- [with the sword](#)
- [lasted](#)

ULT

¹¹ This is what [Yahweh](#) says, "For three sins of Edom, even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because [he pursued his brother with the sword](#) and cast off all pity. His anger raged continually, and his wrath [lasted](#) forever.

UST

¹¹ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared regarding the people of Edom: "[I will not change my mind about punishing](#) the people of Edom because of the many sins that they have committed; [I will not change my mind about punishing](#) them, because [they pursued the people of Israel, who descended from Esau's brother Jacob, and killed them with swords](#); they did not act mercifully toward them at all. They were extremely angry with the people of Israel, [and they continue to be angry with them](#)."

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- I will...change my mind about punishing...I will...change my mind about punishing
- and they continue to be angry with them
- they pursued...and killed
- the people of Israel, who descended from Esau's brother Jacob...them
- with swords

Amos 1:12

Teman ... Bozrah

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

it will devour the palaces of Bozrah

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the palaces. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [fire](#)
- [and it will devour](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [a fire](#)
- [and completely burn](#)

ULT

¹² I will send [fire](#) on Teman, [and it will devour](#) the palaces of Bozrah.”

UST

¹² I will cause [a fire](#) to burn the district of Teman in Edom [and completely burn](#) the fortresses of Bozrah, the biggest city in Edom.”

Amos 1:13

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#).

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#). (See: [Litotes](#))

enlarge their borders

Alternate translation: "extend their boundaries" or "expand their territory"

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [the sons of](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [Gilead](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [regarding the people of...the people of...they...them](#)
- [I will...change my mind about punishing...I will...change my mind about punishing](#)
- [the region of Gilead](#)

ULT

¹³ This is what [Yahweh](#) says, "For three sins of [the sons of Ammon](#), even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because they ripped open the pregnant women of [Gilead](#), that they may enlarge their borders.

UST

¹³ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared [regarding the people of Ammon](#): "[I will not change my mind about punishing the people of Ammon](#) because of the many sins that [they](#) have committed; [I will not change my mind about punishing them](#), because their soldiers even ripped open the bellies of pregnant women when their army attacked [the region of Gilead](#) to order to gain more territory.

Amos 1:14

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Ammon.

it will devour the palaces

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the palaces. (See: [Metaphor](#))

with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind

The fighting against the people of Ammon is spoken of as if it were a violent storm. Alternate translation: "and the fighting will be like a great storm" (See: [Metaphor](#))

tempest ... whirlwind

These are two kinds of violent storms.

whirlwind

a strong wind that spins very quickly as it moves and can cause damage

Translation Words - ULT

- a fire
- Rabbah
- and it will devour

Translation Words - UST

- a fire
- the city of Rabbah
- and to completely burn

ULT

14 I will light a fire in the walls of Rabbah, and it will devour the palaces, with a shout in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind.

UST

14 I will cause a fire to completely burn the walls of the city of Rabbah and to completely burn its fortresses. During that battle, their enemies will shout loudly and the fighting will be like a great storm.

Amos 1:15

Their king will go into captivity

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **captivity**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form such as "capture." This can be translated in active form. Alternate translation: "Their enemies will capture their king and take him away as a prisoner" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Their king](#)
- [and his officials](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the king of Ammon](#)
- [and...officials](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

¹⁵ [Their king](#) will go into captivity, he [and his officials](#) together," says [Yahweh](#).

UST

¹⁵ After the battle, [the king of Ammon](#) and his [officials](#) will together go into exile." [Yahweh](#) has declared this, so it will certainly happen.

Amos 2

Amos 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter consists of oracles against Moab and Judah by using poetic language and imagery. But the UST translates it using prose. If possible, translate this chapter as poetry, but you may translate as narrative.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

You will notice that the phrase “For three sins of Judah, even for four,” is used to begin each of these oracles. This is not intended to be a literal count but is an idiom indicating a large number of sins. (See: [Idiom](#) and [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#))

Amos 2:1

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#).

Moab

This represents the Moabite people. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#). (See: [Litotes](#))

he burned the bones

The word "he" refers to Moab. Alternate translation: "the people of Moab burned the bones"

to lime

Alternate translation: "to ashes"

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Moab](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [king of](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [regarding the people of Moab...the people of Moab...they...them](#)
- [I will punish...I will...change my mind about punishing](#)
- [the king of](#)

ULT

¹ This is what [Yahweh](#) says: "For three sins of [Moab](#), even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because he burned the bones of the [king of Edom](#) to lime.

UST

¹ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared regarding the people of Moab: "[I will punish the people of Moab](#) because of the many sins that [they](#) have committed; [I will not change my mind about punishing them](#), because they dug up the bones of [the king of Edom](#) and burned them completely, with the result that the ashes became as white as lime.

Amos 2:2

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Moab.

Kerioth

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

Moab will die

Here “Moab” represents the people of Moab. Alternate translation: “The people of Moab will die” (See: [Metonymy](#))

in an uproar

An uproar is a very loud noise.

Translation Words - ULT

- fire
- and it will devour
- Moab
- will die
- the sound of
- the horn

Translation Words - UST

- a fire
- to completely burn
- and blowing...loudly
- trumpets
- while I am causing...to be destroyed
- Moab

ULT

² I will send fire on Moab, and it will devour the fortresses of Kerioth. Moab will die in an uproar, with shouting and the sound of the horn.

UST

² So I will cause a fire to completely burn the fortresses of the city of Kerioth in Moab. People will hear soldiers shouting and blowing trumpets loudly while I am causing Moab to be destroyed.

Amos 2:3

the judge in her

Alternate translation: "the ruler of Moab"

all the princes

Alternate translation: "all the officials" or "all the leaders"

Translation Words - ULT

- I will destroy
- I will kill
- the princes
- Yahweh

Translation Words - UST

- I will destroy
- I will kill
- nobles
- I, Yahweh

ULT

³ I will destroy the judge in her, and I will kill all the princes with him," says Yahweh.

UST

³ I will destroy the king inside the city, and I will kill all his nobles. That will surely happen because I, Yahweh, have said it!"

Amos 2:4

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#).

Judah

This represents the people of Judah. Alternate translation: "the people of Judah" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he will punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#). (See: [Litotes](#))

Their lies

This expression here probably refers to worshiping false gods or idols. Alternate translation: "Their worship of idols" (See: [Metaphor](#))

go astray ... walked

Worshiping false gods is spoken of as if people were walking behind them. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [the law of](#)
- [did...keep](#)
- [and...his statutes](#)
- [their fathers](#)
- [had also walked](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [I](#)
- [regarding the people of Judah...the people of Judah...they...them...them](#)
- [they have...obeyed](#)
- [and...my commands](#)
- [worship false gods](#)
- [their ancestors worshiped](#)
- [I will punish...I will...change my mind about punishing](#)
- [taught](#)

ULT

⁴ This is what [Yahweh](#) says: "For three sins of [Judah](#), even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because they rejected [the law of Yahweh](#) and did not [keep his statutes](#). Their lies caused them to go astray, after which [their fathers had also walked](#)."

UST

⁴ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared regarding the people of Judah: "[I will punish the people of Judah](#) because of the many sins that [they](#) have committed; [I will not change my mind about punishing them](#), because they have rejected what [I taught them](#) and [they have not obeyed my commands](#). They have been deceived and persuaded to [worship false gods](#), the same gods that [their ancestors worshiped](#)."

Amos 2:5

it will devour the fortresses of Jerusalem

Here Yahweh's judgment is spoken of as if it were a fire that was consuming the fortresses. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- fire
- on Judah
- and it will devour
- Jerusalem

Translation Words - UST

- a fire
- to completely burn everything
- in Judah
- in Jerusalem

ULT

⁵ I will send fire on Judah, and it will devour the fortresses of Jerusalem.”

UST

⁵ So I will cause a fire to completely burn everything in Judah, including the fortresses in Jerusalem.”

Amos 2:6

For three sins of ... even for four

This is a poetic device. It does not mean that a specific number of sins had been committed, but indicates that many of sins had led to God's judgment. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#).

Israel

This represents the Israelite people. Alternate translation: "the people of Israel" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will not turn away punishment

Yahweh uses two negatives here to emphasize that he would punish them. See how you translated these words in [Amos 1:3](#). (See: [Litotes](#))

the innocent

This refers to innocent people in general. Alternate translation: "innocent people" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

the needy

This refers to needy people in general. Alternate translation: "needy people" (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [I will...turn away punishment](#)
- [the innocent](#)
- [for silver](#)
- [sandals](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [regarding the people of Israel...the people of Israel](#)
- [I will punish...I will...change my mind about punishing them](#)
- [innocent people](#)
- [for a small profit](#)
- [a pair of sandals](#)

ULT

⁶ This is what [Yahweh](#) says: "For three sins of [Israel](#), even for four, [I will not turn away punishment](#), because they sold [the innocent for silver](#) and the needy for a pair of [sandals](#)."

UST

⁶ This is what [Yahweh](#) has declared regarding the people of Israel: "[I will punish the people of Israel](#) because of the many sins that they have committed. [I will not change my mind about punishing them](#), because the wealthy landowners and merchants sell into slavery [innocent people for a small profit](#) and poor people for the cheap price of [a pair of sandals](#)."

Amos 2:7

General Information:

The word “they” in these verses refers to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

They trample on the heads of the poor as people trample on dust on the ground

How the people of Israel treated the poor is compared to how people step heavily on the ground (See: [Simile](#))

trample

repeatedly step heavily or roughly

the poor

This refers to poor people in general. Alternate translation: “poor people” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

they push the oppressed away

This idiom means they refused to listen when the oppressed people said they were being treated unfairly (See: [Idiom](#))

the oppressed

This refers to oppressed people in general. Alternate translation: “oppressed people” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

go in to the same girl

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: “hav sexual relations with the same girl” (See: [Euphemism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the heads of](#)
- [the ground](#)
- [and his father](#)
- [go in](#)
- [my holy](#)
- [name](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the needy](#)
- [the dirt](#)
- [and their fathers](#)

ULT

⁷ They trample [the heads of](#) the poor into the dust of [the ground](#); they thrust aside the way of the oppressed. A man [and his father go in](#) to the same girl and so profane [my holy name](#).

UST

⁷ It is as though they trample [the needy](#) into [the dirt](#) and do not treat the helpless fairly. Men [and their fathers](#) dishonor [me by sleeping](#) with the same slave girl.

- me
- me
- by sleeping

Amos 2:8

those who were fined

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “those who they made to pay a penalty” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- altar
- in the house of
- their God
- and...the wine of

Translation Words - UST

- the altars where they worship their false gods
- They buy wine...it
- in the temples
- of their false gods

ULT

⁸ They lie down beside every altar on clothes taken as pledges, and in the house of their God they drink the wine of those who were fined.

UST

⁸ Furthermore, the rich lenders refuse to return to the poor the garments taken as a pledge at the end of the day as commanded in the law. The poor are left with no blankets to sleep with, while the rich lay on those garment pledges beside the altars where they worship their false gods. They buy wine with the interest they charge, and then they drink it in the temples of their false gods.

Amos 2:9

General Information:

The words “them” and “you” in these verses both refer to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

whose height was like the height of cedars; he was strong as the oaks

This is an exaggeration. It describes how tall and strong the Amorite people were and compares them to the tallest and strongest trees in that region. Alternate translation: “who were tall and strong like great trees” (See: [Hyperbole](#) and [Simile](#))

cedars

cedar trees

oaks

oak trees

Yet I destroyed his fruit above and his roots below

How Yahweh completely destroyed the Amorites is pictured as a tree being destroyed from top to bottom. Alternate translation: “Yet I destroyed them completely” (See: [Idiom](#) and [Merism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Amorites](#)
- [cedars](#)
- [his fruit](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Amor people group](#)
- [as cedar trees](#)
- [the branches of a tree](#)

ULT

⁹ Yet I destroyed [the Amorites](#) before them, whose height was like the height of [cedars](#); he was strong as the oaks. Yet I destroyed [his fruit](#) above and his roots below.

UST

⁹ Long ago, to assist your ancestors, I got rid of [the Amor people group](#). They seemed to be as tall [as cedar trees](#) and as strong as oak trees, but I got rid of them completely, as easily as someone cuts off [the branches of a tree](#) and then digs out all the roots.

Amos 2:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Egypt
- in the wilderness
- to possess
- the land of
- the Amorites

Translation Words - UST

- Egypt
- through the desert
- Then...enabled...to conquer
- the land of
- the Amorites, Canaan

ULT

¹⁰ Also, I brought you up out of the land of Egypt and led you forty years in the wilderness to possess the land of the Amorites.

UST

¹⁰ I brought your ancestors out of Egypt, and then I led them through the desert for forty years. Then I enabled them to conquer the land of the Amorites, Canaan.

Amos 2:11

General Information:

The words “your” and “you” in these verses refer to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

raised up

Alternate translation: “appointed”

Is it not so, people of Israel?

Yahweh asks this question to emphasize what he has said. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “You people of Israel certainly know that what I have said is true!” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

this is Yahweh’s declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. Alternate translation: “this is what Yahweh has declared” or “this is what I, Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [from among your sons](#)
- [sons of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Yahweh’s](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [some of you Israelites](#)
- [You people of](#)
- [me...I, Yahweh](#)
- [Israel](#)

ULT

¹¹ I raised up prophets [from among your sons](#) and Nazirites from your young men. Is it not so, [sons of Israel?](#) — this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration.

UST

¹¹ I chose [some of you Israelites](#) to be prophets, and I chose others to be Nazir who were completely dedicated to [me](#). [You people of Israel](#) certainly know that what [I, Yahweh](#), have declared will happen!

Amos 2:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- to drink wine
- commanded
- the prophets

Translation Words - UST

- you commanded
- the prophets
- to drink wine, which I told them never to do

ULT

¹² But you persuaded the Nazirites to drink wine and commanded the prophets saying, "Do not prophesy!"

UST

¹² But you commanded the prophets to not speak the messages that I gave to them, and you persuaded the Nazir to drink wine, which I told them never to do.

Amos 2:13

General Information:

The word “you” in these verses refers to the people of Israel.

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

Look

This alerts the reader to pay attention to what follows. Alternate translation: “Listen” or “Pay attention to what I am about to tell you”

I will crush you as a cart that is full of grain can crush someone

Yahweh compares his judgment on the people of Israel to crushing them with something very heavy. (See: [Simile](#))

Translation Words - ULT

• I

Translation Words - UST

• I

ULT

¹³ Behold, I will crush you as a cart that is full of grain can crush someone.

UST

¹³ So I will crush you as the wheels of a wagon that is loaded with grain crushes whatever it rolls over.

Amos 2:14

The swift ... the strong ... the mighty

These adjectives refer to people in general. Alternate translation: “Swift people ... strong people ... mighty people” or “The strong person ... the strong person ... the mighty person” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- will be lost
- his own strength
- will...save
- himself

Translation Words - UST

- you will not
- it will be as though you are weak
- will be...to save
- themselves

ULT

¹⁴ A place of refuge **will be lost** by the swift; the strong will not add to **his own strength**; neither will the mighty **save himself**.

UST

¹⁴ Even if you run fast, **you will not** escape; even if you are strong, **it will be as though you are weak**, and warriors **will be** unable to **save themselves**.

Amos 2:15

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues his message of judgment on the people of Israel.

The archer will not stand

Here “stand” means to keep one’s place in battle.

the fast runner will not escape

The implied information is that the fast runner will not escape from his enemies. Alternate translation: “the fast runner will be captured” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- will...stand
- will...escape
- will...escape
- the one who rides
- the horse
- with his life

Translation Words - UST

- you will...survive
- or if you ride away
- on a horse
- you will...be able to save
- you will...be able to save
- yourself

ULT

¹⁵ The one who holds the bow will not stand; the one who is swift with his feet will not escape; the one who rides the horse will not escape with his life.

UST

¹⁵ Even if you are able to shoot arrows well, you will not survive; even if you run fast or if you ride away on a horse, you will not be able to save yourself.

Amos 2:16

flee naked

This could mean: (1) this is a metonym for “run away without his weapons” or (2) this is meant literally as “run away wearing no clothes” (See: [Metonymy](#))

in that day

Alternate translation: “at that time”

this is Yahweh’s declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what Yahweh has declared” or “this is what I, Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Even the bravest](#)
- [Yahweh’s](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [who are very](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

16 [Even the bravest](#) warriors will flee naked in that day— this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration.”

UST

16 Even warriors [who are very](#) brave will drop their weapons when they try to flee on the day that I get rid of them.” [Yahweh](#) has declared this, so it will certainly happen!

Amos 3

Amos 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Amos continues to use poetic form in this chapter to prophesy the disaster coming to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

This chapter begins with a number of rhetorical questions. The last question provides the reader with some answers: "Yahweh has certainly spoken through his prophets. So listen to them." The answer to these rhetorical questions have the expected response of "no" because they are things that are not expected to happen. The writer is helping the reader to conclude that God uses the prophets to speak his message.

Amos 3:1

Hear this word

Alternate translation: "Hear this message" or "Listen to this message"

that Yahweh has spoken against you ... against the whole family

Alternate translation: "this word that Yahweh has spoken about you ... about the whole family" or "Yahweh's message about you ... about the whole family"

you, people of Israel ... the whole family that I brought up out of the land of Egypt

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. The people God is speaking to are the descendants of those he had taken out of Egypt.

the whole family

Here "the whole family" represents to the whole nation. The people of Israel were all descendants of Jacob.
Alternate translation: "the whole nation" or "the whole clan" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [people of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Egypt](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [You people of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Egypt](#)
- [I](#)

ULT

¹ Hear this word that [Yahweh](#) has spoken against you, [people of Israel](#), against the whole family that I brought up out of the land of [Egypt](#) saying:

UST

¹ "[You people of Israel](#), I brought all your ancestors out of [Egypt](#); so listen to what [I](#) am saying about you.

Amos 3:2

I have chosen only you from all the families of the earth

This implies that they should have obeyed him. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "I have chosen only you from all the families of the earth, so you should have obeyed me" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

all the families of the earth

Here "families" represents nations or people groups. Alternate translation: "all the nations of the earth" or "all the clans on the earth" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Therefore I will punish you for all your sins

It can be stated clearly that they did not obey God. Alternate translation: "But you did not obey me. Therefore I will punish you for all your sins" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- I have chosen
- the families of
- I will punish
- your sins

Translation Words - UST

- the people groups
- I chose and took care of
- I will punish
- for the sins that you have committed

ULT

² "I have chosen only you from all the families of the earth. Therefore I will punish you for all your sins."

UST

² From all the people groups on the earth, I chose and took care of only you. That is the reason that I will punish you for the sins that you have committed."

Amos 3:3

General Information:

Amos uses the questions in verses 3-6 to present examples of things that people already know about what causes things to happen and what are the results of things that happen. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Will two walk together unless they have agreed?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what must happen in order for two people to walk together. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "Two people will walk together only if they have first agreed to walk together." or "You know that two people will walk together only if they have agreed to do that." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

³ Will two walk together unless they have agreed?

UST

³ Two people certainly cannot walk together if they have not already agreed what place they will start walking from.

Amos 3:4

Will a lion roar in the forest when he has no victim?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a lion to roar. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "A lion will roar in the forest only when he has a victim." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Will a young lion growl from his den if he has caught nothing?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a lion to growl. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "A young lion will growl from his den only if he has caught something." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- a lion

Translation Words - UST

- A lion

ULT

⁴ Will a lion roar in the forest when he has no victim? Will a young lion growl from his den if he has caught nothing?

UST

⁴ A lion in a forest certainly does not roar if it has not killed another animal. It does not growl in its den if it is not eating the flesh of an animal that it has caught.

Amos 3:5

General Information:

Amos uses the questions in verses 3-6 to present examples of things that people already know about what causes things to happen and what are the results of things that happen. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Can a bird fall in a trap on the ground when no bait is set for him?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a bird to fall into a trap. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "A bird can fall into a trap on the ground only when bait has been set for him." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁵ Can a bird fall in a trap [on the ground](#) when no bait is set for him? Will a trap spring up from the ground when it has not caught anything?

UST

⁵ No one can catch a bird if he does not set [a trap](#) for it. A trap does not spring shut when some animal has not sprung the trap.

Will a trap spring up from the ground when it has not caught anything?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what causes a trap to spring up. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "A trap will spring up from the ground only when it has caught something." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Will a trap spring up from the ground

This refers to a trap closing. When an animal steps on a trap, the trap closes and the animal cannot get out of it. Alternate translation: "Will a trap close"

Translation Words - ULT

- [on the ground](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [a trap](#)

Amos 3:6

If a trumpet sounds in a city, will the people not tremble?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what they already know about what happens when a trumpet sounds. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "When the trumpet sounds in the city, the people will tremble." or "When the trumpet sounds in the city, we expect that people will tremble." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

If a trumpet sounds in a city

The purpose of sounding the trumpet is to warn people that enemies are about to attack the city. Alternate translation: "If someone blows the trumpet in the city to warn the people about an enemy attack" or "If the warning trumpet is blown in the city" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

tremble

The reason for trembling can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "tremble because they are afraid" or "be afraid of the enemy and tremble" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

If disaster overtakes a city, has Yahweh not sent it?

Amos uses this question to remind the people of what they should already know about what causes a disaster. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "If disaster overtakes a city, Yahweh has sent it." or "If disaster overtakes a city, we know that Yahweh has sent it." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

If disaster overtakes a city,

Something terrible happening to a city is spoken of as if disaster overtakes it. (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- a trumpet
- the people
- disaster
- Yahweh

Translation Words - UST

- all the people...a
- disaster
- Yahweh
- horn to signal that enemies are attacking

ULT

⁶ If a trumpet sounds in a city, will the people not tremble? If disaster overtakes a city, has Yahweh not sent it?

UST

⁶ Similarly, all the people in a city certainly become afraid when they hear someone blowing a horn to signal that enemies are attacking. And when a city experiences disaster, Yahweh is the one who has caused it.

Amos 3:7

Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing unless ... the prophets

The relationship between this sentence and the rhetorical questions in [Amos 3:3](#) to [Amos 3:6](#) can be shown with the words "So also." Alternate translation: "So also, the Lord Yahweh will do nothing unless ... the prophets" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Surely the Lord Yahweh will do nothing unless he reveals ... prophets

This can be stated positively. Alternate translation: "Surely the Lord Yahweh will reveal ... prophets before he does anything" or "So also, the Lord will punish people only if he has revealed his plan to his servants the prophets" (See: [Double Negatives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)
- [he reveals](#)
- [his servants](#)
- [the prophets](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Lord](#)
- [disclosing](#)
- [the prophets](#)
- [his servants](#)

ULT

⁷ Surely [the Lord](#) Yahweh will not do anything unless [he reveals](#) his plan to [his servants the prophets](#).

UST

⁷ For Yahweh [the Lord](#) does nothing without first [disclosing](#) his secret plans to [the prophets, his servants](#).

Amos 3:8

The lion has roared; who will not fear?

Amos uses this question to remind people of what people do when a lion roars. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "The lion has roared; so we know that everyone will be afraid." or "The lion has roared; so of course everyone will be afraid." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

The Lord Yahweh has spoken; who will not prophesy?

Amos uses this question to emphasize what people should already know about what prophets do when God speaks. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "The Lord Yahweh has spoken; so we know that the prophets will prophesy." or "The Lord Yahweh has spoken; so of course the prophets will prophesy." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

⁸ [The lion](#) has roared; who will not [fear](#)?
[The Lord](#) Yahweh has spoken; who will not prophesy?

UST

⁸ Everyone certainly [becomes terrified when they hear a lion](#) roar; Yahweh [the Lord](#) has given messages to his prophets, and that is why I am proclaiming his message to you, even though it may terrify you.

Translation Words - ULT

- [The lion](#)
- [will...fear](#)
- [The Lord](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [becomes terrified when they hear](#)
- [a lion](#)
- [the Lord](#)

Amos 3:9

Assemble yourselves

This command is to Israel's enemies in Ashdod and Egypt.

see what great confusion is in her

The word "her" refers to the city of Samaria. Cities were often spoken of as if they were women. (See: [Personification](#))

what great confusion is in her

Here "great confusion is in her" refers to people's fear because of the fighting and rioting there. The word "confusion" can be translated with a verbal phrase to make this meaning explicit. Alternate translation: "how the people in Samaria riot" or "how the people in Samaria fight against one another" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#) and [Abstract Nouns](#))

what oppression is in her

Here "oppression is in her" refers to leaders in Samaria oppressing the people. If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **oppress**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form such as "oppress" or "cause to suffer." Alternate translation: "how the leaders oppress people" or "and how they cause people to suffer" (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [at Ashdod](#)
- [Egypt](#)
- [Assemble yourselves](#)
- [Samaria](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the people...in Ashdod](#)
- [Egypt](#)
- [Come together](#)
- [Samaria](#)

ULT

⁹ Proclaim this in the fortresses [at Ashdod](#), and in the fortresses in the land of [Egypt](#); say, "[Assemble yourselves](#) on the mountains of [Samaria](#) and see what great confusion is in her, and what oppression is in her.

UST

⁹ Proclaim to [the people](#) in the strongholds [in Ashdod](#), and to the people in the fortresses in the land of [Egypt](#) say this: "[Come together](#) on the hills of [Samaria](#), and see how much the people in that city are frightened, and see the way the people are suffering because of what they are doing to each other!"

Amos 3:10

For they do not know how to do right

The word “they” refers to the people of Samaria.

They store up violence and destruction

Here “violence and destruction” represent things they have taken by being violent and destructive. Alternate translation: “They store up things that they have violently stolen from others” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [they do...know](#)
- [Yahweh's](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [The people there do...know how](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

10 For [they do](#) not [know](#) how to do right — this is [Yahweh's](#) declaration— They store up violence and destruction in their fortresses.”

UST

10 [The people there do](#) not [know how](#) to do things that are right. They have filled their fortresses with valuable things they stole or took violently from others.” [Yahweh](#) has declared this.

Amos 3:11

Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says

It can be stated clearly who God was saying this to. Alternate translation: "Therefore, this is what the Lord Yahweh says to the people of Israel living in Samaria" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

An enemy will surround the land

Alternate translation: "An enemy army will surround the land"

plunder your fortresses

Alternate translation: "steal all the things in your fortresses"

Translation Words - ULT

- the Lord
- An enemy
- the land

Translation Words - UST

- our Lord
- Soon their enemies
- into their land

ULT

11 Therefore, this is what [the Lord Yahweh](#) says: "[An enemy](#) will surround [the land](#), and pull down your strongholds and plunder your fortresses."

UST

11 Therefore Yahweh [our Lord](#) has declared this: "Doom is coming! [Soon their enemies](#) will come [into their land](#) and tear down their defenses and take away those valuable things."

Amos 3:12

As the shepherd rescues ... so will the people of Israel ... be rescued

The Lord compares the people of Israel being rescued with an unsuccessful attempt to rescue an animal from a lion. They will not be completely rescued. (See: [Simile](#))

As the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion two legs only, or a piece of an ear

It can be stated clearly that the shepherd tries to rescue the whole animal. Alternate translation: "As the shepherd tries to rescue an animal from the lion's mouth, but is able to save only two legs or a piece of an ear" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

As the shepherd ... the lion

Here the phrases "the shepherd" and "the lion" refer to any shepherd or lion. Alternate translation: "As a shepherd ... a lion" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

they will be left with only the corner of a couch or a piece of a bed

This phrase shows that they will not be completely rescued. Almost all of their possessions will be stolen. This passage in Hebrew is difficult to understand, and some modern versions interpret it differently.

couch

This is a soft chair big enough to lie down on.

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [the sons of](#)
- [Israel](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [only a few people](#)
- [only a few people](#)

ULT

¹² This is what [Yahweh](#) says: "As the shepherd rescues out of the mouth of the lion two legs only, or a piece of an ear; so will [the sons of Israel](#) who live in Samaria be rescued with only the corner of a couch or a piece of a bed."

UST

¹² [Yahweh](#) has declared this: "When a lion attacks a sheep, sometimes a shepherd is able to snatch from the lion's mouth only two legs or an ear of the sheep. Similarly, [only a few people](#) from Samaria will escape, just as if someone could save only a part of a couch or a bed from a fire in the house."

Amos 3:13

the house of Jacob

The word “house” is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Jacob’s descendants. They were the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “the descendants of Jacob” (See: [Metonymy](#))

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated the similar phrase “this is Yahweh’s declaration” in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts, has declared” or “this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts, have declared” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [and testify](#)
- [against the house of](#)
- [Jacob](#)
- [the Lord](#)
- [the God of](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [our Lord](#)
- [commander of the](#)
- [this message](#)
- [about the descendants of](#)
- [Jacob](#)

ULT

¹³ Hear [and testify against the house of Jacob](#)— this is the declaration of [the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts](#):

UST

¹³ Yahweh [our Lord](#), the [commander of the](#) angel armies, has decalred this: “Proclaim [this message about the descendants of Jacob](#):

Amos 3:14

in the day that I punish the sins of Israel

Alternate translation: "when I punish the sins of Israel"

I will also punish the altars of Bethel

People sinned against God by worshiping false gods at their altars. Here "punish the altars" represents punishing the people by destroying their altars. Alternate translation: "I will also destroy the altars at Bethel" (See: [Metonymy](#))

The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Your enemies will cut off the horns of the altars, and the horns will fall to the ground" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

horns of the altar

People worshiped false gods at their altars. At the top corners of the altars there were pieces of metal shaped like bull horns. These horns were a symbol of the strength of their gods.

Translation Words - ULT

- that I bring punishment for
- Israel
- I will also bring punishment
- the altars of
- the altar
- Bethel
- Bethel
- and fall

Translation Words - UST

- I punish
- the people of Israel
- I will destroy
- the altars at
- the altars
- the town of Bethel
- the town of Bethel
- and fall

ULT

¹⁴ "For on the day that I bring punishment for the sins of Israel on her, I will also bring punishment on the altars of Bethel. The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground.

UST

¹⁴ For on the day of judgment when I punish the people of Israel because of the sins that they have committed, I will destroy the altars at the town of Bethel; even the projections at the corners of the altars will break and fall to the ground.

Amos 3:15

the winter house with the summer house

Some of the wealthy people had two houses: one that they lived in during the winter and one that they lived in during the summer. This refers to any winter and summer houses. Alternate translation: “the houses they live in during the winter and the houses they live in during the summer” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

The houses of ivory will perish

God speaks of the houses being destroyed as if they were alive and would die. Alternate translation: “The houses of ivory will be destroyed” or “The houses of ivory will collapse” (See: [Personification](#))

The houses of ivory

“the houses that are decorated with ivory.” This refers to houses that had decorations made of ivory on the walls and furniture. Ivory was very expensive, so only the wealthy people had things decorated with ivory.

ivory

the teeth and horns of large animals

the large houses will vanish

“the large houses will exist no more.” Here “vanish” represents being destroyed. Alternate translation: “the large houses will be destroyed” (See: [Metaphor](#))

this is Yahweh’s declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what Yahweh has declared” or “this is what I, Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the...house](#)
- [the...house](#)
- [The houses of](#)
- [the...houses](#)
- [will perish](#)
- [Yahweh’s](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the houses](#)
- [the houses...they](#)
- [houses](#)
- [houses](#)

ULT

¹⁵ I will destroy the winter [house](#) with the summer [house](#). [The houses of ivory will perish](#), and the large [houses](#) will vanish— this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration.”

UST

¹⁵ I will cause [the houses](#) that they live in during the winter to be torn down; and [the houses](#) they live in during the summer, [they will also be torn down](#). Beautiful big [houses](#) and [houses](#) that are decorated with ivory will be destroyed.” [Yahweh](#) has declared this, so it will certainly happen!

- will also be torn down
- Yahweh

Amos 4

Amos 4 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and is about the people's refusal to listen to Yahweh even as he tries to point them back to himself.

Special concepts in this chapter

Repetition

This chapter contains a repeated sentence: "Yet you have not returned to me —this is Yahweh's declaration." Please make sure this sentence is translated the same way each time to show the repetition. This repetition produces a list of sins Yahweh is mounting against his people. (See: [sin](#), [sinful](#), [sinner](#), [sinning](#) and [people of God](#))

Amos 4:1

you cows of Bashan, you who are in the mountain of Samaria

Amos speaks to the women of Israel who live in Samaria as if they were well-fed cows. Alternate translation: “you wealthy women who live in the mountains of Samaria, you who are like the well-fed cows of Bashan” (See: [Metaphor](#))

you who oppress the poor

The phrase “the poor” refers to poor people. Alternate translation: “you who oppress poor people” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

you who crush the needy

Hear “crush” is a metaphor that represents treating people badly. The phrase “the needy” refers to people who need help. Alternate translation: “you who treat needy people badly” or “you who hurt needy people” (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Bashan](#)
- [Samaria](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Samaria](#)
- [Bashan](#)

ULT

¹ Listen to this word, you cows of [Bashan](#), you who are in the mountain of [Samaria](#), you who oppress the poor, you who crush the needy, you who say to your husbands, “Bring us drinks.”

UST

¹ Listen up, you wealthy women of [Samaria](#)! You have gorged yourselves on luxuries and grown fat like the cows of the region of [Bashan](#). You oppress poor people, and you cause needy people to suffer. And you say to your husbands, “Bring us more wine to drink!”

Amos 4:2

The Lord Yahweh has sworn by his holiness

This means that Yahweh promised that he would do something, and he assured people that he would do what he promised because he is holy.

the days will come on you

The word “you” refers to the wealthy women of Israel who lived in Samaria, but also includes men.

the days will come on you when they will take you away with hooks

A time in the future when bad things will happen to the people is spoken of as if those days will attack the people. The word “they” refers to their enemies. Alternate translation: “There will be a time when your enemies will take you away with hooks” (See: [Metaphor](#))

they will take you away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that the enemy will capture the people like people catch fish. Alternate translation: “they will capture you as people capture animals, and they take you away” or “they will defeat you and cruelly force you to go away with them” (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [The Lord](#)
- [has sworn](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [But...has said this...I solemnly promise](#)
- [our God](#)

ULT

² [The Lord](#) Yahweh [has sworn](#) by his holiness saying, “Behold, the days will come on you when they will take you away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks.

UST

² [But](#) Yahweh [our God has said this](#): “Because I am holy, [I solemnly promise](#) this: It will soon be the time when you all will be taken to another country; your enemies will take you away using sharp hooks to grab you.

Amos 4:3

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

breaks in the city wall

places where the enemy had broken down the city wall to enter

you will be thrown out toward Harmon

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “they will throw you out toward Harmon” or “your enemies will force you to leave the city and go toward Harmon” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Harmon

This is either the name of a place that we do not know, or it refers to Mount Hermon. Some modern versions interpret it in that way. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

this is Yahweh’s declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what Yahweh has declared” or “this is what I, Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [You will go out through](#)
- [Yahweh’s](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Your enemies will drag...out](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

³ [You will go out through](#) the breaks in the city wall, each one going straight through, and you will be thrown out toward Harmon— this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration.”

UST

³ [Your enemies will drag](#) you [out](#) and you will go through breaks in your city walls, and they will force you to go toward Harmon.” [Yahweh](#) has declared this, so it will certainly happen.

Amos 4:4

General Information:

God gives several commands in verse 4, but he does so to show that he is angry

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

Go to Bethel and sin, to Gilgal and multiply sin

People would go to Bethel and Gilgal to make sacrifices to God, but they kept sinning anyway. God makes these commands to show that he is angry with them for doing these things. These commands can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You go to Bethel to worship, but you sin. You go to Gilgal to worship, but you sin even more" (See: [Irony](#))

bring your sacrifices ... every three days

God makes these commands in order to show the people that he is angry that even though they do these things, they continue to sin against him in other ways. These commands can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You bring your sacrifices ... every three days, but it does you no good." (See: [Irony](#))

every three days

This could mean: (1) on the third day or (2) every third day. Some versions have "every three years," because the Israelites were supposed to bring their tithes to God once every three years.

Translation Words - ULT

- [Bethel](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Gilgal](#)
- [sin](#)
- [your sacrifices](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [to the hilltop places of idol worship that are at Bethel](#)
- [to the hilltop places of idol worship that are at Bethel](#)
- [and Gilgal](#)
- [more and more against me](#)
- [sacrifices](#)

ULT

⁴ "Go to [Bethel](#) and sin, to [Gilgal](#) and multiply [sin](#), bring [your sacrifices](#) every morning, your tithes every three days.

UST

⁴ Go ahead: go [to the hilltop places of idol worship that are at Bethel and Gilgal](#), where many people worship me; go and rebel [more and more against me](#)! Offer [sacrifices](#) on the morning after you arrive, and bring me a tenth of your crops the next day.

Amos 4:5

Offer a thanksgiving sacrifice ... proclaim freewill offerings; announce them, for this pleases

God makes these commands in order to show the people that even though they do these things, he is angry because they continue to sin against him in other ways. Use the form in your language that shows that they will do these things no matter what Yahweh says, but these things will do them no good. (See: [Irony](#))

announce them

Alternate translation: “boast about them”

for this pleases you, you people of Israel

Yahweh rebukes them for being proud about their offerings and sacrifices. They think that God should be pleased with them, but he is not. Alternate translation: “for this pleases you, you people of Israel. But it does not please me” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated the similar phrase “this is Yahweh’s declaration” in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what the Lord Yahweh declares” or “this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [a thanksgiving sacrifice](#)
- [proclaim](#)
- [freewill offerings](#)
- [pleases you](#)
- [you sons of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [the Lord](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [to thank me](#)
- [and other](#)
- [offerings that are not required](#)
- [you...you](#)
- [you...you](#)
- [the Lord](#)
- [like to do; but...do it to impress others, not to please me](#)

ULT

⁵ Offer [a thanksgiving sacrifice](#) with bread; [proclaim freewill offerings](#); announce them, for this [pleases you, you sons of Israel](#)— this is the declaration of [the Lord](#) Yahweh.

UST

⁵ Bring offerings of bread [to thank me, and other offerings that are not required](#), and boast about these offerings that you bring, because that is what you like to do; but [you](#) do it to impress others, not to please me.” Yahweh [the Lord](#) has declared this.

Amos 4:6

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

I gave you cleanness of teeth

Here having clean teeth represents having no food in the mouth to make the teeth dirty. Alternate translation: "I caused you to starve" (See: [Metonymy](#))

lack of bread

Giving them "lack of bread" represents causing them to lack bread, and "bread" represents food in general. Alternate translation: "I caused you not to have enough food" (See: [Metonymy](#))

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. Alternate translation: "you have not submitted again to me" (See: [Metaphor](#))

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [bread](#)
- [you have...returned](#)
- [Yahweh's](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [no food](#)
- [you did...return](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

⁶ For I also gave you cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of [bread](#) in all your places. Yet [you have](#) not [returned](#) to me— this is [Yahweh's](#) declaration.

UST

⁶ "What's more, I am the one who caused there to be [no food](#) in any of your cities and towns, yet [you did](#) not [return](#) to me." declares [Yahweh](#).

Amos 4:7

I also withheld rain from you

Alternate translation: "I prevented the rain from falling on your crops"

when there were still three months to the harvest

It can be stated clearly that the people needed the rain. Alternate translation: "when there were still three months to the harvest and your crops needed the rain" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

One piece of land was rained on

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. The phrase "One piece of land" represents any piece of land." Alternate translation: "It rained on one piece of land" or "It rained on some pieces of land" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

the piece of land where it did not rain

This refers to any piece of land where it did not rain. Alternate translation: "the pieces of land where it did not rain" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

Translation Words - ULT

• I

Translation Words - UST

• I

ULT

⁷ I also withheld rain from you when there were still three months to the harvest. I caused it to rain on one city, and caused it not to rain on another city. One piece of land was rained on, but the piece of land where he caused it not to rain on it dried up.

UST

⁷ Furthermore, when it was still three months before the time of harvesting crops, at the time when your crops needed rain the most, I prevented rain from falling. Sometimes I allowed rain to fall on some towns and prevented it from falling on other towns. Rain fell on some fields, but it did not fall on other fields, with the result that the soil in those fields where it did not rain dried up.

Amos 4:8

Two or three cities staggered

Here “cities” represents the people of those cities. Alternate translation: “The people of two or three cities staggered” (See: [Metonymy](#))

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. See how you translated this in [Amos 4:6](#). Alternate translation: “you have not submitted again to me” (See: [Metaphor](#))

this is Yahweh’s declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what Yahweh has declared” or “this is what I, Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [you have...returned](#)
- [Yahweh’s](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [you did...return](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

⁸ Two or three cities staggered to another city to drink water, but were not satisfied. Yet [you have](#) not [returned](#) to me— this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration.

UST

⁸ Your people would stagger from one town to another town to find water, but they could not even get enough water to drink. Yet, [you did](#) not [return](#) to me.” declares [Yahweh](#).

Amos 4:9

I afflicted you with blight and mildew

Here “afflicted you” represents afflicting their crops. Alternate translation: “I afflicted your crops with blight and mildew” or “I destroyed your crops with blight and mildew” (See: [Metonymy](#))

blight

This is a disease that dries and kills plants. It is caused by the hot wind from the desert.

mildew

This is another disease that kills plants.

Translation Words - ULT

- [your vineyards](#)
- [your fig trees](#)
- [and your olive trees](#)
- [the locusts](#)
- [devoured them all](#)
- [you have...returned](#)
- [Yahweh's](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [The locusts](#)
- [devoured](#)
- [and vineyards](#)
- [your fig trees](#)
- [and olive trees](#)
- [you did...return](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

⁹ I afflicted you with blight and mildew. The multitude of your gardens, [your vineyards, your fig trees, and your olive trees](#)— [the locusts devoured them all](#). Yet [you have not returned](#) to me— this is [Yahweh's](#) declaration.

UST

⁹ Many times I struck your crops with disease and mildew. [The locusts devoured](#) your gardens [and vineyards, your fig trees and olive trees](#), yet [you did not return](#) to me.” declares [Yahweh](#).

Amos 4:10

I sent a plague on you as on Egypt

Alternate translation: "I sent a plague on you as I did on Egypt" or "I sent a plague on you as I sent plagues on Egypt"

I sent a plague on you

Alternate translation: "I caused terrible things to happen to you"

I killed your young men with the sword

Here "the sword" represents battle. God killed them by sending enemies to fight against them. Alternate translation: "I made your enemies kill your men in battle" (See: [Metonymy](#))

carried away your horses

God speaks of causing the enemies to steal their horses as if he carried the horses away. Alternate translation: "I made your enemies take away your horses" (See: [Metonymy](#))

made the stench of your camp come up to your nostrils

A stench is a bad smell. The stench coming up to their nostrils represents them smelling something terrible. It can be stated clearly that the smell was from the dead bodies of those who were killed. Alternate translation: "I made you smell the terrible odor of the dead bodies in your camp" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

you have not returned to me

Returning to God represents submitting again to him. See how you translated this in [Amos 4:6](#). Alternate translation: "you have not submitted again to me" (See: [Metaphor](#))

this is Yahweh's declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh has declared" or "this is what I, Yahweh, have declared" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Egypt](#)
- [I killed](#)
- [with the sword](#)
- [your horses](#)
- [you have...returned](#)
- [Yahweh's](#)

ULT

¹⁰ I sent a plague on you in the manner of [Egypt](#). I [killed](#) your young men [with the sword](#), carried away [your horses](#), and made the stench of your camp come up to your nostrils. Yet [you have not returned](#) to me— this is [Yahweh's](#) declaration.

UST

¹⁰ I caused you to experience plagues like the plagues that I sent to [the people of Egypt](#). I [caused](#) many of your young men [to die in battles](#), and allowed your enemies to capture [your horses](#). Many of your soldiers were killed, and your camps were filled with the smell of their corpses. Yet, [you did not return](#) to me." declares [Yahweh](#).

Translation Words - UST

- the people of Egypt
- I caused...to die
- in battles
- your horses
- you did...return
- Yahweh

Amos 4:11

You were like a burning stick snatched out of the fire

God speaks of those who survived the plague and war as if they were a burning stick that someone pulled out of a fire. Alternate translation: "Some of you survived, like a burning stick that someone pulls out of a fire" (See: [Metaphor](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [God](#)
- [Sodom](#)
- [and Gomorrah](#)
- [you have...returned](#)
- [Yahweh's](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [like](#)
- [the people in Sodom](#)
- [and Gomorrah](#)
- [you did...return](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

¹¹ I overthrew cities among you, as when [God](#) overthrew [Sodom and Gomorrah](#). You were like a burning stick snatched out of the fire. Yet [you have](#) not [returned](#) to me— this is [Yahweh's](#) declaration.

UST

¹¹ I got rid of many of you, [like the people in Sodom and Gomorrah](#). Those of you who did not die were like a burning stick that was snatched from a fire so that it would not burn completely. Yet, [you did](#) not [return](#) to me." declares [Yahweh](#).

Amos 4:12

Connecting Statement:

God continues to speak to the people of Israel.

prepare to meet your God

God says this to warn the people of Israel that he will judge them. Alternate translation: "prepare to meet me, your God" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Israel](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [your God](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [people of Israel](#)
- [you](#)
- [your God](#)

ULT

¹² Therefore I will do something terrible to you, [Israel](#); and because I will do something terrible to you, prepare to meet [your God, Israel!](#)

UST

¹² So now, you [people of Israel](#), I am going to punish you. Prepare to stand in front of me, [your God](#), when I judge [you!](#)

Amos 4:13

he who forms the mountains ... reveals his thoughts ... is his name

It is not clear whether Amos is speaking about God, or God is speaking about himself. If God is speaking about himself, it can be translated with the words "I" and "me." Alternate translation: "I who form the mountains ... reveal my thoughts ... is my name" (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

makes the morning darkness

This could mean: (1) God causes the day to be very dark with thick clouds. Alternate translation: "makes the morning dark" or (2) God causes time to pass, so every day becomes night. Alternate translation: "makes morning and evening"

treads on the high places of the earth

God ruling over all the earth is spoken of as if he walks on the highest places of the earth. Alternate translation: "rules over all the earth" or "rules over even the highest places of the earth" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Yahweh, God of hosts, is his name

By declaring his full name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things. Your language may have a way for people to do this.

Translation Words - ULT

- [the wind](#)
- [to mankind](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [God of](#)
- [is his name](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the winds](#)
- [to humans](#)
- [everything...on the earth](#)
- [I am](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [commander of](#)

ULT

¹³ For, behold, he who forms the mountains also creates [the wind](#), reveals his thoughts [to mankind](#), makes the morning darkness, and treads on the high places of [the earth](#). [Yahweh, God of hosts, is his name.](#)"

UST

¹³ So, listen! I created the mountains, and [the winds](#). I reveal [to humans](#) what I am thinking. and sometimes cause the daylight to become dark like the night. I rule over [everything](#), and even walk on the highest mountains [on the earth! I am Yahweh, commander of the angel armies!](#)"

Amos 5

Amos 5 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to be written in a poetic format and foretells the destruction of the kingdom of Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Place Names

This chapter refers to various places in land of Israel (i.e. Gilgal, Bethel, Beersheba). Normally these places have good connotations, but here they are referred to negatively. This is most likely because these cities became known for their idol worship. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

City gate

The “city gate” is mentioned several times. This was a place where people would go with legal and financial issues. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Amos 5:1

house of Israel

The word “house” is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel’s descendants. Alternate translation: “you people of Israel” or “you Israelite people group” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- I
- house of
- Israel

Translation Words - UST

- You people of
- Israel
- I

ULT

¹ Hear this word that I take up as a lament over you, [house of Israel](#).

UST

¹ [You people of Israel](#), listen to this funeral song that I will sing about you:

Amos 5:2

The virgin Israel has fallen ... no one to raise her up

The phrase “The virgin Israel” represents the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel being destroyed and having no other nation to help them become strong again is spoken of as if it were a young woman who has fallen and has no one to raise her up. Alternate translation: “The nation of Israel is like a woman who has fallen ... no one to help her get up” (See: [Metaphor](#))

she is forsaken on her land

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “People have forsaken her” or “they have abandoned her” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [The virgin](#)
- [Israel](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [You are like](#)
- [a young woman](#)

ULT

² [The virgin Israel](#) has fallen; she will rise no more; she is forsaken on her land; there is no one to raise her up.

UST

² “[You are like a young woman](#), but in spite of that, you will certainly be struck down and you will never get up again! You will lie on the ground, abandoned, and there will be no one to help you stand up.”

Amos 5:3

The city that went out with a thousand ... the one that went out with a hundred

These phrases refer to any cities that sent out large numbers of soldiers. Alternate translation: "Cities that went out with a thousand ... cities that went out with a hundred" (See: [Generic Noun Phrases](#))

The city that went out with a thousand will have a hundred left

The phrases "a thousand" and "a hundred" refer to a thousand soldiers and a hundred soldiers. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

The city that went out with a thousand

"The city that went out" represents the soldiers of that city going out. It can be stated clearly why they went out. Alternate translation: "The city out of which a thousand soldiers went to fight" or "The city that sent out a thousand soldiers to fight" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

will have a hundred left

"will have a hundred soldiers who have not been killed" or "will have only a hundred soldiers still alive." Here being "left" refers to not being killed by the enemy.

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)
- [belonging to the house of](#)
- [Israel](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Lord](#)
- [to the people of](#)
- [Israel](#)

ULT

³ For this is what [the Lord](#) Yahweh says: "The city that went out with a thousand will have a hundred left, and the one that went out with a hundred will have ten left [belonging to the house of Israel](#)."

UST

³ This is what Yahweh [the Lord](#) has declared [to the people of Israel](#): "When your enemies attack you, and when a thousand of your soldiers go into battle, only a hundred will survive. When a hundred soldiers march out from a city to fight, only ten will remain alive."

Amos 5:4

Seek me

Here “Seek me” represents asking God for help. Alternate translation: “Ask me for help” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- to the house of
- Israel
- Seek me
- and live

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- to the people of
- you will continue to remain alive
- Israel: “You Israelite people
- return to me! If you do that

ULT

⁴ For this is what Yahweh says to the house of Israel: “Seek me and live!

UST

⁴ This is what Yahweh has declared to the people of Israel: “You Israelite people, return to me! If you do that, you will continue to remain alive.

Amos 5:5

Do not seek Bethel

Here “seek Bethel” represents going to Bethel to ask for help.
Alternate translation: “Do not go to Bethel to ask for help” (See: [Metaphor](#))

nor enter Gilgal

Alternate translation: “and do not enter Gilgal”

For Gilgal will surely go into captivity

Here “Gilgal” represents the people of Gilgal, and going into captivity refers to being captured and taken away. Alternate translation: “For the people of Gilgal will surely be captured and taken away” or “For your enemies will surely capture the people of Gilgal and take them away” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Bethel will become nothing

Here “become nothing” represents being destroyed. Alternate translation: “Bethel will be completely destroyed” or “enemies will completely destroy Bethel” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Do...seek](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [and Bethel](#)
- [and Bethel](#)
- [Gilgal](#)
- [Gilgal](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [surely](#)
- [will...go into captivity](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Do...go to...to seek my help](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Gilgal](#)
- [the people of Gilgal](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [to other countries](#)
- [your enemies will drag away](#)

ULT

⁵ Do not [seek Bethel](#); nor enter [Gilgal](#); do not journey to [Beersheba](#). For [Gilgal](#) will [surely go into captivity](#), and [Bethel](#) will become nothing.

UST

⁵ Do not [go to Bethel to seek my help](#); do not go to [Gilgal](#) to worship; do not go to [Beersheba](#), because [your enemies will drag away the people of Gilgal to other countries](#), and they will completely destroy [Bethel](#).”

Amos 5:6

Seek Yahweh

Here “Seek Yahweh” represents asking him for help. Alternate translation: “Ask Yahweh for help” or “Ask me, Yahweh, for help” (See: [Metaphor](#))

he will break out like fire

Here “break out like a fire” represents destroying things as fire destroys things. Alternate translation: “he will become like a fire that breaks out suddenly and destroys everything” or “he will destroy everything like a fire” (See: [Simile](#))

the house of Joseph

This phrase is a metonym for the descendants of Joseph. Here it represents the northern kingdom of Israel, whose two largest tribes were the descendants of Joseph. Alternate translation: “the descendants of Joseph” or “Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Synecdoche](#))

It will devour

The word “it” refers to the fire, and “devour” represents destroying everything. God destroying everything is spoken of as if a fire were to destroy everything. Alternate translation: “It will destroy everything” or “He will destroy everything” (See: [Metaphor](#))

there will be no one to quench it

Alternate translation: “there will no one to stop it” or “there will be no one to stop him from destroying everything”

Translation Words - ULT

- [Seek](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [and live](#)
- [in the house of](#)
- [Joseph](#)
- [It will devour](#)
- [in Bethel](#)
- [in Bethel](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [So come to...if you do that](#)
- [Yahweh...Yahweh](#)
- [you will remain alive](#)
- [on you descendants of](#)
- [Joseph](#)
- [will burn everything in](#)
- [Bethel...that town](#)
- [Bethel...that town](#)

ULT

⁶ [Seek Yahweh and live](#), or he will break out like fire [in the house of Joseph](#). [It will devour](#), and there will be no one to quench it [in Bethel](#).

UST

⁶ [So come to Yahweh; if you do that, you will remain alive](#). If you do not do that, [Yahweh will come down on you descendants of Joseph](#) like a fire; that fire [will burn everything in Bethel](#) and nothing will be able to save [that town](#).

Amos 5:7

turn justice into a bitter thing

Here “a bitter thing” represents actions that harm people, and “turn justice into a bitter thing” represents harming people rather than doing for them what is just. Alternate translation: “say that they are doing what is just, but instead they harm people” or “refuse to do what is just and harm people instead” (See: [Metaphor](#))

throw righteousness down to the ground

This represents treating righteousness as if it were worthless. Alternate translation: “treat righteousness as though it were as unimportant as dirt” or “you despise what is righteous” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [justice](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [what is right](#)

ULT

⁷ Those people turn [justice](#) into a bitter thing and throw righteousness down to the ground!”

UST

⁷ You people distort [what is right](#); you make others think that it is something very bitter; you treat good things as though they were evil.

Amos 5:8

the Pleiades and Orion

People saw patterns in the stars in the sky and gave names to them. These are two of those patterns. Alternate translation: “the stars” or “the groups of stars” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

he turns darkness into the morning ... day dark with night

“he makes the night become morning, and he makes the day become night.” This refers to causing the times of the day.

calls for the waters ... on the surface of the earth

This represents God causing the sea water to fall on the earth as rain. Alternate translation: “he takes the waters of the sea and makes them rain down on the surface of the earth” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Yahweh is his name!

By declaring his name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things.

Translation Words - ULT

- [the surface of](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [is his name](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the earth](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [The one who does those things is](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

⁸ God made the Pleiades and Orion; he turns darkness into the morning; he makes the day dark with night and calls for the waters of the sea; he pours them out on [the surface of the earth](#). [Yahweh is his name!](#)

UST

⁸ God created all the groups of stars and he put them in their places. Each morning he causes the darkness to become the dawn, and each evening he causes the daylight to become darkness. He scoops up water from the oceans to become clouds, and then he dumps the water from the clouds onto [the earth](#). [The one who does those things is Yahweh.](#)

Amos 5:9

He brings sudden destruction on the strong

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **destruction**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form such as “destroy.” The phrase “the strong” refers to strong people, specifically soldiers. Alternate translation: “He suddenly destroys the strong people” or “He suddenly destroys the soldiers” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#) and [Nominal Adjectives](#))

so that destruction comes on the fortresses

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **destruction**, you could express the same idea with a verbal form such as “destroy.” Alternate translation: “so that the fortresses are destroyed” or “and he destroys the fortresses” (See: [Abstract Nouns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the strong](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the rulers and the wealthy landowners](#)

ULT

⁹ He causes destruction to fall on [the strong](#), and destruction comes down on the fortresses.

UST

⁹ He brings sudden destruction on [the rulers and the wealthy landowners](#), and he destroys their fortified cities.

Amos 5:10

They hate anyone

Alternate translation: "The people of Israel hate anyone"

Translation Words - ULT

- [in the city gate](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [to make unjust decisions](#)

ULT

¹⁰ They hate anyone who corrects them [in the city gate](#), and they abhor anyone who speaks the truth.

UST

¹⁰ You hate those who challenge anyone who tries [to make unjust decisions](#); you hate those who tell the truth in your courts.

Amos 5:11

worked stone

Alternate translation: “cut stones” or “stones that people have cut”

you will not drink their wine

The word “their” refers to the vineyards. This may imply that no one will make the wine, or even that there will not be enough good grapes to make wine. Alternate translation: “you will not drink the wine that is made from the grapes in your vineyards” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [wheat](#)
- [houses of](#)
- [vineyards](#)
- [their wine](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [hefty taxes](#)
- [mansions](#)
- [vineyards](#)
- [there will...be any grapes](#)

ULT

11 Therefore, because you trample down the poor and take portions of [wheat](#) from him— although you have built [houses of](#) worked stone, you will not live in them. You have delightful [vineyards](#), but you will not drink [their wine](#).

UST

11 Doom is coming on you wealthy landowners and nobles because you oppress poor people and force them to pay [hefty taxes](#). You have built big stone [mansions](#) for yourselves, but you will not be able to live in them. You have planted delightful [vineyards](#), but [there will not be any grapes](#) for you to harvest to make wine.

Amos 5:12

afflict the just, take bribes, and turn aside the needy in the city gate

This is a list of some of their sins.

the just

The word “just” is a nominal adjective that refers to just people. Alternate translation: “just people” or “righteous people” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

take bribes

Alternate translation: “let people pay you to do bad things” or “let people pay you to lie about people”

turn aside the needy in the city gate

Here “turn aside the needy” represents telling the needy people to leave. It can be made clear why the needy were at the city gate. Alternate translation: “do not allow poor people to bring their cases to the judges in the city gate” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the needy

The word “needy” is a nominal adjective that refers to people who are in need. Alternate translation: “people in need” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- I know
- are your sins
- you who afflict
- the just
- in the city gate

Translation Words - UST

- I know
- that you have committed
- You oppress
- righteous people
- justly

ULT

¹² For I know how many are your offenses and how great are your sins—you who afflict the just, take bribes, and turn aside the needy in the city gate.

UST

¹² For I know all of your sins and the terrible crimes that you have committed. You oppress righteous people, and you accept bribes. You do not allow judges to treat poor people justly.

Amos 5:13

any prudent person is silent

Those who do not want the evil people to harm them will not speak out against the evil deeds. Alternate translation: “wise people do not speak about the evil things people are doing”

for it is an evil time

Here “an evil time” represents a time when people are evil and do evil deeds. Alternate translation: “for it is a time when people are evil” or “for people do evil things” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [evil](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [people do evil things](#)

ULT

¹³ Therefore any prudent person is silent at such a time, for it is an [evil](#) time.

UST

¹³ This is a time when many [people do evil things](#), so people who have good sense say nothing at all.

Amos 5:14

Seek good and not evil

Here “Seek good” represents choosing to do what good. “Good” and “evil” represent good actions and evil actions. Alternate translation: “Choose to do what is good and not what is evil” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Seek](#)
- [good](#)
- [evil](#)
- [you may live](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [the God of](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [remain alive](#)
- [what is wrong](#)
- [start doing](#)
- [what is right](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [commander of](#)

ULT

¹⁴ [Seek good](#) and not [evil](#), so that [you may live](#). So [Yahweh, the God of](#) hosts, will really be with you, as you say he is.

UST

¹⁴ In order to [remain alive](#), you must stop doing [what is wrong](#), and [start doing what is right](#). If you do that, [Yahweh, commander of](#) the angel armies, will be with you as you claim that he always is.

Amos 5:15

Hate evil, love good

“Hate evil actions, and love good actions.” Here “good” and “evil” represent good actions and evil actions.

establish justice in the city gate

Here “establish justice” represents making sure that justice is done. Alternate translation: “make sure that justice is done in the city gates” or “make sure that the judges make just decisions in the city gates” (See: [Idiom](#))

in the city gate

City gates were where business transactions occurred and judgments were made, because city walls were thick enough to have gateways that produced cool shade from the hot sun. Alternate translation: “in your courts” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

the remnant of Joseph

Here “remnant” refers to people who are still living in Israel after the others are killed or taken away as captives. Here “Joseph” represents the northern kingdom of Israel, whose two largest tribes were the descendants of Joseph. See how you translated “house of Joseph” in [Amos 5:6](#). Alternate translation: “the descendants of Joseph who are still alive” or “those of Israel who survive” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- evil
- love
- good
- justice
- in the city gate
- Yahweh
- the God of
- the remnant of
- Joseph

Translation Words - UST

- Love...and
- what is good
- what is evil
- in your courts
- that are right
- Yahweh
- commander of
- you descendants of...who are still alive
- Joseph

ULT

15 Hate [evil](#), [love good](#), establish [justice in the city gate](#). Perhaps [Yahweh](#), the [God of hosts](#), will be gracious to the [remnant of Joseph](#).

UST

15 [Love what is good](#), and hate [what is evil](#)! Try to cause judges [in your courts](#) to make decisions [that are right](#)! If you do those things, perhaps [Yahweh](#), [commander of the angel armies](#), will act mercifully toward [you descendants of Joseph who are still alive](#).

Amos 5:16

this is what Yahweh says, the God of hosts, the Lord

Alternate translation: "this is what Yahweh, the God of hosts, the Lord says"

Wailing will be in all the squares

Alternate translation: "People will wail in all the town squares"

Wailing

long, loud, sad cries

the squares

broad open places in the town where people gather

the mourners to wail

The phrase "they will call" is understood from the beginning of the sentence. Alternate translation: "they will call the mourners to wail" (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- the God of
- the Lord
- They will call
- the farmers
- wail

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh...Yahweh
- the Lord
- the commander of
- Farmers
- will leave their fields
- the other official mourners

ULT

¹⁶ Therefore, this is what Yahweh says, the God of hosts, the Lord, "Wailing will be in all the squares, and they will say in all the streets, 'Woe! Woe!' They will call the farmers to mourning and the mourners to wail.

UST

¹⁶ Therefore, Yahweh will punish you for your sins! This is what Yahweh, the Lord, the commander of angel armies, has solemnly declared: "People will be wailing loudly in every street, and people will cry in horror in every plaza at the complete desolation. Farmers will leave their fields to come and weep, along with the other official mourners who will wail for those who have died.

Amos 5:17

I will pass through your midst

God speaks of punishing the people as if he were to come and punish them while walking through the group of them. Alternate translation: "I will come and punish you" or "I will punish you"

Translation Words - ULT

- vineyards
- Yahweh

Translation Words - UST

- vineyards
- Yahweh

ULT

¹⁷ In all vineyards there will be wailing, for I will pass through your midst," says Yahweh.

UST

¹⁷ People will be wailing in your vineyards, because I will punish you severely," declares Yahweh.

Amos 5:18

Why do you long for the day of Yahweh?

God uses this question to rebuke the people for saying that they want the day of Yahweh to be soon. If your readers would misunderstand this question, you can express it as a statement. Alternate translation: "You long for the day of Yahweh." or "You should not long for the day of Yahweh!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

It will be darkness and not light

Here "darkness" represents a time when disasters happen, and "light" represents a time when good things happen. Alternate translation: "It will be a time of darkness and disaster, not of light and blessing" or "On that day there will be disasters, not blessings" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [darkness](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [a](#)
- [of darkness](#)

ULT

18 Woe to you who desire the day of [Yahweh](#)! Why do you long for the day of [Yahweh](#)? It will be [darkness](#) and not light,

UST

18 Terrible things will happen to you who want [Yahweh](#) to punish his enemies, because that will be [a day of darkness](#), not of light.

Amos 5:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- a house
- his hand

Translation Words - UST

- into your house to be safe
- your hand

ULT

¹⁹ as when a man flees from a lion and a bear meets him, or he goes in a house and puts his hand on the wall and a snake bites him.

UST

¹⁹ At that time, when you try to run from a lion, you will face a bear. When you run into your house to be safe, and you put your hand on the wall, a snake will bite it.

Amos 5:20

Will not the day of Yahweh be darkness and not light?

This question emphasizes that bad things will happen then. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "The day of Yahweh will certainly be darkness and not light!" or "Bad things, not good things, will certainly happen on the day of Yahweh!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Gloom and no brightness?

The words "Will not the day of Yahweh be" is understood from the previous sentence. Like the previous question, it emphasizes that terrible things, not good things, will happen on the day of Yahweh. It can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "It will be a time of when terrible things, not good things, will happen. (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Parallelism](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [be darkness](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [when he punishes people](#)
- [like a dark night](#)

ULT

²⁰ Will not the day of [Yahweh be darkness](#) and not light? Gloom and no brightness?

UST

²⁰ That day, [when he punishes people](#), will certainly be awful, [like a dark night](#) without even a little bit of light.

Amos 5:21

I hate, I despise your festivals

The word “despise” is a strong word for “hate.” Together the two words emphasize the intensity of Yahweh’s hatred for their religious festivals. Alternate translation: “I hate your festivals very much” (See: [Doublet](#))

I take no delight in your solemn assemblies

Alternate translation: “Your solemn assemblies do not please me at all”

Translation Words - ULT

- [your festivals](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [your religious celebrations](#)

ULT

²¹ “I hate, I despise [your festivals](#), I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

UST

²¹ Yahweh says, “I hate [your religious celebrations](#) and the times when you gather to worship me; I detest them all.

Amos 5:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- burnt offerings
- your...and grain offerings

Translation Words - UST

- offerings to burn on the altar
- and offerings of grain

ULT

²² Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them, neither will I look at the fellowship offerings of your fattened animals.

UST

²² Even if you bring me offerings to burn on the altar and offerings of grain, I will no longer accept them. Even if you bring me offerings to restore fellowship with me, I will not pay any attention to them.

Amos 5:23

Remove from me the noise of your songs

This speaks of the noise of songs as if it could be put somewhere else. It represents stopping singing. Alternate translation: "Stop singing your noisy songs" (See: [Metaphor](#))

noise

unpleasant sounds

ULT

²³ Remove from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the sound of your harps.

UST

²³ So stop singing noisy songs! I will not listen when you play harps.

Amos 5:24

let justice flow like water, and righteousness like a constantly flowing stream

This represents causing there to be much justice and righteous. Alternate translation: “let there be so much justice that it is like flowing water, and let there be so much righteousness that it is like a constantly flowing stream” or “let justice abound like a flood, and let righteousness abound like a stream that never stops” (See: [Simile](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [justice](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [act justly](#)

ULT

²⁴ Instead, let [justice](#) flow like water, and righteousness like a constantly flowing stream.

UST

²⁴ Instead, [act justly](#) and righteously; you should do this and never stop; if you do, it will be like the water in a river that never stops flowing.

Amos 5:25

Did you bring me sacrifices ... Israel?

This could mean: (1) God uses this question to rebuke them because they did not offer sacrifices. Alternate translation: "You did not bring me sacrifices ... Israel." or (2) God uses this question to remind them that the sacrifices were not the most important part about their relationship. Alternate translation: "You did not have to bring me sacrifices ... Israel." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Did you bring

God speaks as though the Israelites he is speaking to were part of the group that wandered in the wilderness. Alternate translation: "Did your ancestors bring" (See: [Metonymy](#))

house of Israel

The word "house" is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel's descendants. See how you translated it in [Amos 5:1](#). Alternate translation: "you people of Israel" or "you Israelite people group" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [sacrifices and offerings](#)
- [in the wilderness](#)
- [house of](#)
- [Israel](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [You Israelite](#)
- [people](#)
- [wandered through the wilderness](#)
- [and offerings](#)

ULT

²⁵ Did you bring me [sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness](#) for forty years, [house of Israel](#)?

UST

²⁵ [You Israelite people](#), your ancestors [wandered through the wilderness](#) for forty years; and during that time, they never brought any [sacrifices and offerings](#) to me!

Amos 5:26

You have lifted up the images of Sikkuth ... and Kaiwan

Here “lifted up the images” represents worshiping them. Alternate translation: “You have worshiped the images of Sikkuth ... and Kaiwan” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Sikkuth ... Kaiwan

These are the names of two false gods. The people had made images to represent them. (See: [How to Translate Names](#))

Kaiwan

Some versions write this as “Kiyyun.”

Translation Words - ULT

- [your...god](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [that you worship](#)

ULT

²⁶ You have lifted up the images of Sikkuth, your king, and Kaiwan, your star [god](#), which you made for yourselves.

UST

²⁶ But you carried the two idols that you have made for yourselves— Sikkuth, the god whom you call ‘king,’ and Kaiwan, the image of the star [that you worship](#).

Amos 5:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- whose name is
- the God of

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- He is
- commander of

ULT

²⁷ Therefore I will exile you beyond Damascus," says Yahweh, whose name is the God of hosts.

UST

²⁷ For I will now force you to go to a country that is far beyond Damascus!" Yahweh has declared this; He is the commander of angel armies.

Amos 6

Amos 6 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues to be written in poetic style except for verses 9-10, which are in prose. These two verses contain many interesting features.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Verses 9-10 will probably be difficult to translate because the situation is vague and details don't appear to align easily. It is appropriate to translate these verses with some ambiguity remaining. It may be helpful to read many different versions prior to translating these verses.

Amos 6:1

who are at ease

“who feel safe.” The people are comfortable and not concerned that God will judge them.

the notable men of the best of the nations

“the most important men of this great nation.” Yahweh may be using irony to describe how these men think of themselves. Alternate translation: “the men who think they are the most important people in the best nation” (See: [Irony](#))

the house of Israel comes

The word “house” is a metonym for the family that lives in the house. In this case it refers to Israel’s descendants. Alternate translation: “the Israelites come” or “the Israelite people group comes” (See: [Metonymy](#))

comes for help

Here “comes” can be stated as “goes.” Alternate translation: “goes for help” (See: [Go and Come](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [in Zion](#)
- [Samaria](#)
- [the best of](#)
- [the nations](#)
- [the house of](#)
- [Israel](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [people in Jerusalem](#)
- [the city of Samaria](#)
- [the most important people](#)
- [in the world](#)
- [Israelites](#)
- [Israelites](#)

ULT

¹ Woe to those who are at ease [in Zion](#), and to those who are secure in the hill country of [Samaria](#), the notable men of [the best of the nations](#), to whom [the house of Israel](#) comes for help!

UST

¹ Terrible things will happen to you [people in Jerusalem](#) who are not worried about anything, and also to you leaders who live on the hill of [the city of Samaria](#), you who think that you are safe. You call yourselves [the most important people in the world](#), and you are the leaders to whom [Israelites](#) go for help.

Amos 6:2

Kalneh

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

Are they better than your two kingdoms?

The notable men use this question to emphasize that the kingdoms of Israel and Judah are better than those other kingdoms. Alternate translation: "Your two kingdoms are better than they are." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Is their border larger than your border?

The notable men use this question to emphasize that their kingdoms are larger than those other kingdoms. Alternate translation: "Their border is smaller than yours." or "Those countries are smaller than Judah and Samaria." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Philistines](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [in Philistia](#)

ULT

² "Go to Kalneh and look; from there go to Hamath, the great city; then go down to Gath of [the Philistines](#). Are they better than your two kingdoms? Is their border larger than your border?"

UST

² You tell them, "Just go to the city of Kalneh and look at it. Then go to see the great city Hamath and to Gath [in Philistia](#) and look at it. They are all prosperous. Now your lands are better than those places, and your two countries—Judah and Samaria—are bigger. So you are safe."

Amos 6:3

to those who put off the day of disaster

Refusing to believe that Yahweh will cause disaster is spoken of as if the “day of disaster” were an object the people could put far from themselves. Alternate translation: “to those who refuse to believe that I will cause them to experience disaster” (See: [Metaphor](#))

and make the throne of violence come near

Here “throne” is a metonym that represents reign or rule. The people doing evil things, which causes Yahweh to bring disaster on them, is spoken of as if they were causing “violence” to rule them. Alternate translation: “but who are actually causing me to send violent people to destroy you” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [disaster](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Terrible things will happen to you leaders...disasters](#)

ULT

³ Woe to those who put off the day of [disaster](#) and make the throne of violence come near.

UST

³ [Terrible things will happen to you leaders!](#) You are trying to avoid thinking about the coming time when you will experience [disasters](#), when your enemies will violently attack you.

Amos 6:4**lie ... lounge**

Israelites at that time usually ate while sitting on a floor cloth or a simple seat.

beds of ivory

Alternate translation: "beds decorated with ivory" or "costly beds"

ivory

a white substance made from the teeth and horns of large animals
(See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

lounge

lie around like lazy people

couches

soft seats large enough to lie down on

Translation Words - ULT

- [They eat](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [You eat](#)

ULT

⁴ They lie on beds of ivory and lounge on their couches. [They eat](#) lambs from the flock and calves from the stall.

UST

⁴ You recline on couches decorated with expensive ivory and lounge on padded beds. [You eat](#) the tender meat of lambs and fat calves.

Amos 6:5

they improvise on instruments

This could mean: (1) they invent new songs and ways of playing the instruments or (2) they invent new instruments.

ULT

⁵ They sing foolish songs to the music of the harp; they improvise on musical instruments as David did.

UST

⁵ You create new songs as if you had nothing better to do, and you play them on your harps like King David did.

Amos 6:6

drink wine from bowls

This implies that they drink a lot of wine because they drink it from a large bowl rather than a regular wine cup. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

they do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph

Here “Joseph” represents his descendants. Alternate translation: “they do not grieve about the descendants of Joseph whom enemies will soon destroy” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [wine](#)
- [oils](#)
- [Joseph](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [of wine](#)
- [oils](#)
- [Israel](#)

ULT

⁶ They drink [wine](#) from bowls and anoint themselves with the finest [oils](#), but they do not grieve over the ruin of [Joseph](#).

UST

⁶ You drink entire bowlfuls [of wine](#), and you put expensive [oils](#) on your bodies, but you do not grieve about our country of [Israel](#).

Amos 6:7**they will now go into exile with the first exiles**

Alternate translation: "they will be among the first ones to go into exile" or "I will send them into exile first"

the feasts of those who lounge about will pass away

Alternate translation: "there will be no more feasts for people to lie around at ease"

Translation Words - ULT

- they will go
- into exile
- with the first exiles

Translation Words - UST

- you will be...to be forced by your enemies
- to go into exile
- among the first ones

ULT

⁷ Therefore, now they will go into exile with the first exiles, and the feasts of those who lounge about will pass away.

UST

⁷ Therefore judgment is coming, and coming soon. Your feasting and lounging on soft couches will end, and you will be among the first ones to be forced by your enemies to go into exile.

Amos 6:8

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13](#). Alternate translation: “this is what the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts, has declared” or “this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts, have declared” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

I detest the pride of Jacob

Here “Jacob” represents his descendants. Alternate translation: “I hate the descendants of Jacob because they have become arrogant” (See: [Metonymy](#))

I hate his fortresses

It is implied that Yahweh hates the fortresses because the people believed the fortresses would keep them safe. Alternate translation: “I hate the people of Israel because they trust in their fortresses, not in me, to protect them” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- the Lord
- I...have sworn
- by myself
- Yahweh
- the God of
- I
- Jacob

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- the Lord
- the commander of
- solemnly...will happen
- that this
- I
- the people of Israel

ULT

⁸ “I, the Lord Yahweh, have sworn by myself— this is the declaration of Yahweh, the God of hosts, I detest the pride of Jacob; I hate his fortresses. Therefore I will deliver up the city with all that is in it.”

UST

⁸ Yahweh the Lord, the commander of angel armies has solemnly declared that this will happen: “I hate the people of Israel because they are very proud; I detest their fortresses. I will enable their enemies to capture their capital city and everything in it.”

Amos 6:9

General Information:

In 6:9-10 Amos describes a hypothetical situation of what it will be like when Yahweh hands the people of Israel over to their enemies. (See: [Hypothetical Situations](#))

if there are ten men left in one house, they will all die

This seems to imply that something terrible is happening, and these ten men go into the house to hide. Alternate translation: "if ten men are hiding inside of a house, they will all still die" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [in...house](#)
- [they will all die](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [in...house](#)
- [they will all die](#)

ULT

⁹ It will come about that if there are ten men left in one [house](#), [they will all die](#).

UST

⁹ When that happens, if there are ten people in one [house](#), [they will all die](#).

Amos 6:10

a man's relative comes to take their bodies up—the one who is to cremate them after bringing the corpses out of the house—if he says to the person in the house, "Is ... you?"

The meaning of these words is not clear. This could mean: (1) the "man's relative" is the one who will "take their bodies up" and "cremate ... the corpses," and he speaks to a person who hid in the house after the ten family members died or (2) the "man's relative" who "comes to take their bodies up" is a different person from "the one who is to cremate ... the corpses," and they talk to each other in the house. Alternate translation: "a man's relative comes to take their bodies up, and the one who will burn the corpses after they have been brought out of the house is with him—if while they are in the house the relative says to the burner of the corpses, 'Is ... you?'"

cremate

to burn a dead body

bringing the corpses

Alternate translation: "bringing the dead bodies"

Then he will say, "Be quiet, for we must not mention Yahweh's name."

The meaning of this is not clear. It seems to imply that the one who asked the question is afraid the one answering will mention Yahweh's name carelessly. If he does this, it may draw Yahweh's attention to them, and he may kill them too. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the house](#)
- [the house](#)
- [Yahweh's](#)
- [name](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the house](#)
- [there](#)
- [Yahweh's...or he may have a reason to kill us](#)
- [by mentioning his name](#)

ULT

¹⁰ When a man's relative comes to take their bodies up—the one who is to cremate them after bringing the corpses out of [the house](#)—if he says to the person in [the house](#), "Is there anyone with you?" What if that person says, "No." Then he will say, "Be quiet, for we must not mention [Yahweh's name](#)."

UST

¹⁰ If a relative who has the task of burning their corpses comes to [the house](#) and inquires of anyone who is still hiding [there](#), "Is there anyone here with you?" and that person replies "No," the one who inquired will say, "Be quiet! You must not call [Yahweh's](#) attention to us [by mentioning his name](#), or he may have a reason to kill us!"

Amos 6:11

look

Alternate translation: “listen” or “pay attention”

the big house will be smashed to pieces, and the little house to bits

These two phrases share similar meanings. The contrast between “the big house” and “the little house” means that this refers to all houses. Alternate translation: “all the houses will be smashed into small pieces” (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Merism](#))

the big house will be smashed to pieces

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “the enemy will smash the big house to pieces” (See: [Active or Passive](#))

to pieces ... to bits

You can use the same word for both of these phrases.

the little house to bits

This can be stated with the understood information included. Alternate translation: “enemies will smash the little house to bits” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [will give a command](#)
- [the...house](#)
- [and the...house](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [has commanded that](#)
- [the...houses in Israel](#)
- [and...houses](#)

ULT

¹¹ For, behold, [Yahweh will give a command](#), and the big [house](#) will be smashed to pieces, [and the little house](#) to bits.

UST

¹¹ Terrible things like that will happen because [Yahweh has commanded that](#) the large [houses in Israel](#) must be smashed into pieces, and small [houses](#) must be smashed into tiny bits.

Amos 6:12

General Information:

Amos uses two rhetorical questions to draw attention to the rebuke that follows.

Do horses run on the rocky cliffs?

It is impossible for a horse to run on rocky cliffs without getting hurt. Amos uses this rhetorical question to rebuke them for their actions. Alternate translation: "Horses do not run on rocky cliffs." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Does one plow there with oxen?

One does not plow on rocky ground. Amos uses this rhetorical question to rebuke them for their actions. Alternate translation: "A person does not plow with oxen on rocky ground." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Yet you have turned justice into poison

Distorting what is just is spoken of as if the leaders "turned justice into poison." Alternate translation: "Yet you distort what is just" or "But you make laws that hurt innocent people" (See: [Metaphor](#))

the fruit of righteousness into bitterness

This means basically the same thing as the first part of the sentence. Distorting what is right is spoken of as if righteousness were a sweet fruit that the people made bitter tasting. Alternate translation: "you distort what is right" or "you punish those who do what is right" (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [horses](#)
- [justice](#)
- [and the fruit of](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Horses](#)
- [what is fair...the laws](#)
- [and...the very ones...were meant to protect](#)

ULT

¹² Do [horses](#) run on the rocky cliffs? Does one plow there with oxen? Yet you have turned [justice](#) into poison [and the fruit of](#) righteousness into bitterness.

UST

¹² [Horses](#) certainly do not run on big rocks, and certainly people cannot plow the rocks with oxen. But you have distorted [what is fair](#); you have changed what is right, crippling and impoverishing [the very ones the laws were meant to protect](#)

Amos 6:13

Lo Debar ... Karnaim

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

Have we not taken Karnaim by our own strength?

The people use a question to emphasize that they believe they captured a city because of their own power. Alternate translation: "We captured Karnaim by our own power!" (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

ULT

13 You who rejoice over Lo Debar, who say, "Have we not taken Karnaim by our own strength?"

UST

13 You are proud because you have captured the town of Lo Debar, and you have said, "We certainly took the town of Karnaim by our own power!"

Amos 6:14

look

Alternate translation: “listen” or “pay attention”

this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 3:13](#). Alternate translation: “this is what the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts, has declared” or “this is what I, the Lord Yahweh, the God of hosts, have declared” (See: [First](#), [Second](#) or [Third Person](#))

from Lebo Hamath to the brook of the Arabah

Here “Lebo Hamath” represents the northern border of Israel, and “brook of the Arabah” represents the southern border. Alternate translation: “from the northern border of your nation to the southern border” (See: [Metonymy](#))

brook

a small river that flows only during the wet season

Translation Words - ULT

- [a nation](#)
- [house of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [the God of](#)
- [the Arabah](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [the commander of](#)
- [a certain nation](#)
- [people of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [the Arabah](#)

ULT

14 Therefore, behold, I will raise up against you [a nation](#), [house of Israel](#)—this is the declaration of [Yahweh, the God of](#) hosts. They will afflict you from Lebo Hamath to the brook of [the Arabah](#).”

UST

14 Therefore, [Yahweh, the commander of](#) the angel armies, has declared this: “Behold, I will cause [a certain nation](#) to attack you [people of Israel](#); they will oppress you all the way from Hamath Pass in the northwest to the brook of [the Arabah](#).”

Amos 7

Amos 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is mainly written as a narrative about the prophet Amos interacting with Yahweh. Yahweh presents three different scenarios of judgment before Amos who pleads with God and he does not carry out His judgment. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#) and [judge](#), [judgment](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

Reported speech

In the latter part of the chapter, it is important to follow the conversation carefully to understand who is speaking. There are some instances of “reported speech.” (See: [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

Amos 7:1

Look ... look

The writer is telling the reader that he is about to say something surprising. Your language may have a way of doing this.

locust

See how you translated this in [Amos 4:9](#).

after the king's harvest

Alternate translation: "after the king takes his share from the harvest"

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)
- [the king's](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Lord](#)
- [the king's share](#)

ULT

¹ This is what [the Lord](#) Yahweh showed me. Behold, he formed a locust swarm when the spring crop began to come up, and, behold, it was the late crop after [the king's](#) harvest.

UST

¹ This is what [the Lord](#) Yahweh showed me in a vision: "Behold, he is going to send locusts to destroy our crops. It is going to happen right after [the king's share](#) of the hay has been harvested and before the rest of the hay is ready to be harvested.

Amos 7:2

please forgive

The words “your people” or “us” are understood. Alternate translation: “please forgive your people” or “please forgive us” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

how will Jacob survive? For he is so small.

Here “Jacob” represents his descendants the Israelites. Alternate translation: “how will we Israelites survive? We are so small and weak!” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [they finished](#)
- [the land](#)
- [Lord](#)
- [Jacob](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [I saw those locusts come](#)
- [everything](#)
- [our Lord](#)
- [We Israelite people](#)

ULT

² When [they finished](#) eating the vegetation of [the land](#), then I said, “[Lord](#) Yahweh, please forgive; how will [Jacob](#) survive? For he is so small.”

UST

² In the vision [I saw those locusts come](#), and they ate [everything](#) that was green. Then I cried out, “Yahweh [our Lord](#), please forgive us! [We Israelite people](#) are very helpless; how will we be able to survive?”

Amos 7:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- he
- relented

Translation Words - UST

- So...showed mercy
- Yahweh
- Yahweh

ULT

³ Yahweh relented concerning this. "It will not happen," he said.

UST

³ So Yahweh showed mercy and said, "That will not happen."

Amos 7:4

Look

The writer is telling the reader that something surprising is about to happen. Your language may have a way of doing this.

the Lord Yahweh called on fire to judge

Alternate translation: "the Lord Yahweh used burning fire to punish the people"

Translation Words - ULT

- the Lord
- the Lord (2)
- called
- on fire
- It dried
- and would have devoured

Translation Words - UST

- our Lord
- our Lord (2)
- was calling
- to a fire
- In the vision I saw that the fire had dried up
- and also had burned

ULT

⁴ This is what the Lord Yahweh showed me: Behold, the Lord Yahweh called on fire to judge. It dried the vast, deep water under the earth and would have devoured the land, also.

UST

⁴ Then this is what Yahweh our Lord showed me in another vision: Behold, Yahweh our Lord was calling to a fire to come and punish his people. In the vision I saw that the fire had dried up the water under all the land and also had burned everything on the land.

Amos 7:5

how will Jacob survive? For he is so small.

Here "Jacob" represents his descendants the Israelites. See how you translated this in [Amos 7:2](#). Alternate translation: "how will the Israelites survive? We are so small and weak!" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Lord](#)
- [Jacob](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [our Lord](#)
- [Israelite people](#)

ULT

⁵ But I said, "[Lord](#) Yahweh, please stop; how will [Jacob](#) survive? For he is so small."

UST

⁵ Then I cried out again, "Yahweh [our Lord](#), I plead with you, please stop this! We [Israelite people](#) are very helpless; how will we be able to survive?"

Amos 7:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- relented
- the Lord

Translation Words - UST

- So...showed mercy
- Yahweh
- the Lord

ULT

⁶ Yahweh relented concerning this, "This also will not happen," said the Lord Yahweh.

UST

⁶ So Yahweh showed mercy again, and Yahweh the Lord said, "That also will not happen."

Amos 7:7

plumb line

thin rope with a weight at one end used in building to make sure walls stand straight up and down

Translation Words - ULT

- the Lord
- and...was in his hand

Translation Words - UST

- the Lord
- The Lord had...in his hand

ULT

⁷ This is what he showed me: Behold, **the Lord** stood beside a wall with a plumb line, and the plumb line **was in his hand**.

UST

⁷ Then he showed me another vision. Behold, I saw **the Lord** standing beside a wall. It was very straight because it had been built using a plumb line. **The Lord had** the plumb line **in his hand**.

Amos 7:8

what do you see?

Yahweh uses a question to teach Amos. Alternate translation: “tell me what you see.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

I will put a plumb line among my people Israel

Judging the people and determining they are wicked is spoken of as if the Israelites were a wall, and Yahweh determines the wall is not straight by using a plumb line. Alternate translation: “my people Israel are wicked. They are like a wall that is not straight up and down” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- Amos
- the Lord
- my people
- Israel

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- Amos
- the Lord
- my people...they
- Israel

ULT

⁸ Yahweh said to me, “Amos, what do you see?” I said, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said, “Behold, I will put a plumb line among my people Israel. Never again will I spare them.

UST

⁸ Yahweh asked me, “Amos, what do you see?” I replied, “A plumb line.” Then the Lord said, “Look, I am going to use a plumb line among my people, Israel, to show that they are crooked. I will not spare them from punishment any longer.

Amos 7:9

The high places of Isaac will be destroyed, the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword

Here “sword” represents an army. If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “I will send an army to attack the house of Jeroboam, and the army will destroy the high places of Isaac and the sanctuaries of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Active or Passive](#))

Isaac ... Israel

Both of these represent the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “the descendants of Isaac ... the people of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

the house of Jeroboam

Here “house” represents “family.” Translate “Jeroboam” as you did in [Amos 1:1](#). Alternate translation: “Jeroboam and his family” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the sanctuaries of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [the house of](#)
- [Jeroboam](#)
- [with the sword](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [And...to the other important holy places](#)
- [in Israel](#)
- [King Jeroboam](#)
- [and all his descendants](#)
- [the swords of his enemies](#)

ULT

⁹ The high places of Isaac will be destroyed, [the sanctuaries of Israel](#) will be ruined, and I will rise against [the house of Jeroboam with the sword.](#)”

UST

⁹ Then I will destroy the hilltop places where the descendants of Isaac worship idols. And I will also lay waste [to the other important holy places in Israel.](#) And I will raise up against [King Jeroboam and all his descendants the swords of his enemies.](#)

Amos 7:10

Amaziah, the priest of Bethel

This could mean: (1) Amaziah was the only priest at Bethel or (2) Amaziah was the leader of the priests at Bethel.

Amaziah

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

Amos has conspired against you in the middle of the house of Israel

Here “house” represents “people.” Alternate translation: “Amos is right here among the Israelites, and he is planning to do bad things to you” (See: [Metonymy](#))

The land cannot bear all his words

Here “land” represents “people.” Disrupting the peace is spoken of as if Amos’s words were a heavy object that the land could not carry. Alternate translation: “What his is saying disturb the peace among the people” or “His message will cause trouble among the people” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Amaziah](#)
- [the priest of](#)
- [The land](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Bethel](#)
- [Jeroboam](#)
- [king of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Amos](#)
- [the house of](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Amaziah](#)
- [the priest](#)
- [the people of this country](#)
- [at Bethel](#)
- [at Bethel](#)
- [Jeroboam](#)
- [the king of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Israelite](#)
- [Amos](#)
- [the...people](#)

ULT

¹⁰ Then [Amaziah, the priest of Bethel](#), sent a message to [Jeroboam, king of Israel](#), saying: “[Amos](#) has conspired against you in the middle of [the house of Israel](#). [The land](#) cannot bear all his words.

UST

¹⁰ Then [Amaziah the priest at Bethel](#), sent a message to [Jeroboam, the king of Israel](#). In the message he said, “[Amos](#) is plotting against you among the [Israelite people](#). I am worried that [the people of this country](#) will not know that he is wrong.

Amos 7:11

Jeroboam will die by the sword

Here "sword" represents the enemies. Alternate translation: "Enemies will kill Jeroboam" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Amos](#)
- [Jeroboam](#)
- [by the sword](#)
- [surely](#)
- [will...go into exile](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Amos](#)
- [Jeroboam](#)
- [murdered by an enemy wielding a sword](#)
- [the enemies of](#)
- [will forcibly remove...and send them](#)

ULT

11 For this is what [Amos](#) said, '[Jeroboam](#) will die [by the sword](#), and Israel will [surely go into exile](#) away from his land.'

UST

11 This is what [Amos](#) is saying: '[Jeroboam](#) will soon die, [murdered by an enemy wielding a sword](#). and [the enemies of Israel will forcibly remove](#) the people of Israel [and send them](#) away from their land.'

Amos 7:12

there eat bread and prophesy

Here “eat bread” is an idiom that means to earn money or make a living for doing something. Alternate translation: “see if you can get the people there to pay you for prophesying” or “prophesy there and let them provide you with food” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Amaziah](#)
- [Amos](#)
- [go](#)
- [the land of](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [there](#)
- [bread](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Amaziah](#)
- [Amos](#)
- [get out of here](#)
- [the country of](#)
- [Judah](#)
- [there](#)
- [earn money](#)

ULT

¹² [Amaziah](#) said to [Amos](#), “Seer, [go](#), run yourself back to [the land of Judah](#), and [there](#) eat [bread](#) and prophesy.

UST

¹² Then [Amaziah](#) came to [Amos](#) and said, “You prophet, [get out of here](#)! Flee for your life back to [the country of Judah](#)! Do your prophesying [there](#) if you want to [earn money](#)!”

Amos 7:13

for it is the king's sanctuary and a royal house

Here "king's sanctuary" and "royal house" refer to the same place.
Alternate translation: "this is where the national temple is, the place where the king worships" (See: [Doublet](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [But...at Bethel](#)
- [But...at Bethel](#)
- [king's](#)
- [the...sanctuary](#)
- [royal](#)
- [and...a...house](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [at Bethel](#)
- [at Bethel](#)
- [national](#)
- [the...temple](#)
- [the king's](#)
- [temple](#)

ULT

¹³ [But](#) you must never again prophesy here [at Bethel](#), for it is the [king's sanctuary](#), and it is a [royal house](#)."

UST

¹³ Do not prophesy anymore here [at Bethel](#), because this is where the [national temple](#), [the king's temple](#), is!"

Amos 7:14

herdsman

This here probably means “one who takes care of sheep” since he is called a “shepherd” in [Amos 1:1](#).

sycamore fig trees

Sycamores are broad trees that grow up to 15 meters tall. Alternate translation: “fig trees” (See: [Translate Unknowns](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Amos](#)
- [Amaziah](#)
- [I am](#)
- [am I](#)
- [I am](#)
- [a prophet](#)
- [prophet's](#)
- [a...son](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Amos](#)
- [Amaziah](#)
- [I was](#)
- [my father was](#)
- [I was](#)
- [previously...a prophet](#)
- [a prophet](#)
- [my father was](#)

ULT

14 Then [Amos](#) answered and said to [Amaziah](#), “[I am](#) not a prophet nor [am I](#) a prophet's son, for [I am](#) a herdsman, and I take care of sycamore fig trees.

UST

14 [Amos](#) replied to [Amaziah](#), “[I was](#) previously not a prophet and [my father was](#) not a prophet; [I was](#) a shepherd. I also took care of sycamore fig trees.

Amos 7:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- Yahweh (2)
- the flock
- Go
- my people
- Israel

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- Yahweh (2)
- my sheep
- Go
- to Israel...there
- my people

ULT

¹⁵ But Yahweh took me from tending the flock, and Yahweh said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

UST

¹⁵ But Yahweh took me away from taking care of my sheep, and Yahweh said to me, 'Go to Israel and prophesy to my people there!'

Amos 7:16

Now

Here the word “now” is used to draw attention to the important point that follows.

do not speak against the house of Isaac

Here “house” represents the family or descendants of Isaac.
Alternate translation: “do not speak against the descendants of Isaac” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [the house of](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh's](#)
- [the people of Israel](#)
- [the people of Israel](#)

ULT

16 Now hear the word of [Yahweh](#). You say, ‘Do not prophesy against [Israel](#), and do not speak against [the house of Isaac](#).’

UST

16 So now, listen to [Yahweh's](#) judgment. “You said to me, ‘Do not prophesy and say that terrible things will happen to [the people of Israel](#); stop saying those things!’

Amos 7:17

your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword

Here "sword" represents enemies. Alternate translation: "enemies will kill your sons and daughters" (See: [Metonymy](#))

your land will be measured and divided up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "other people will take your land and divide it up among themselves" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

an unclean land

A land full of people that are unacceptable to God is spoken of as if the land were physically unclean. Here it means a land other than Israel. Alternate translation: "a foreign land" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- Yahweh
- will be a prostitute
- your sons
- by the sword
- surely
- will...go into exile

Translation Words - UST

- Yahweh
- will become a prostitute
- your sons
- because their enemies will kill them
- certainly have to
- will...leave...and go into exile

ULT

¹⁷ Therefore this is what Yahweh says, 'Your wife **will be a prostitute** in the city; **your sons** and your daughters will fall **by the sword**; your land will be measured and divided up; you will die in an unclean land, and Israel will **surely go into exile** from his land.'

UST

¹⁷ Therefore, this is what Yahweh has declared about you: 'Your wife **will become a prostitute** in this very city; **your sons** and daughters will die **because their enemies will kill them**. Others will measure your land and divide it up among themselves; and you yourself will die in a foreign country. And the people of Israel will **certainly have to leave** their country **and go into exile**.'

Amos 8

Amos 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and it shows the way Yahweh's people are sinning and how he is going to respond. (See: [people of God](#) and [sin, sinful, sinner, sinning](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

“This is the declaration of Yahweh”

This phrase is used to introduce prophecy. It highlights what God is proclaiming. (See: [prophet, prophecy, prophesy, seer, prophetess](#))

Amos 8:1

Look, a basket of summer fruit!

The word “look” here shows that Amos saw something interesting.
Alternate translation: “I saw a basket of summer fruit!”

summer fruit

Alternate translation: “ripe fruit”

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [our Lord](#)

ULT

¹ This is what [the Lord](#) Yahweh showed me. Behold, a basket of summer fruit!

UST

¹ This is what Yahweh [our Lord](#) showed me in a vision: Look, a basket full of ripe fruit.

Amos 8:2

What do you see, Amos?

Yahweh uses a question to teach Amos. Alternate translation: "Tell me what you see, Amos." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Amos](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [my people](#)
- [Israel](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [Amos](#)
- [Israelite](#)
- [my...people](#)

ULT

² He said, "What do you see, [Amos](#)?" I said, "A basket of summer fruit." Then [Yahweh](#) said to me, "The end has come for [my people Israel](#); I will spare them no longer.

UST

² [Yahweh](#) asked me, "[Amos](#), what do you see?" I replied, "A basket full of ripe fruit." He said, "That indicates that it is almost the end for my [Israelite people](#). I will not spare them from punishment any longer.

Amos 8:3

in that day

Alternate translation: "at that time"

Silence!

This could mean: (1) Yahweh is telling the people to be silent as they hear about the severity of his punishment or (2) the people will be silent because of their grief after Yahweh's punishment.

Translation Words - ULT

- the temple
- the Lord

Translation Words - UST

- in the temple
- the Lord

ULT

³ The songs of the temple will become wailings in that day— this is the declaration of the Lord Yahweh— many dead bodies, they are thrown everywhere! Silence!"

UST

³ Soon the people will be wailing instead of singing in the temple. There will be corpses everywhere, and people will say nothing as they remove them." Yahweh the Lord has declared this will happen.

Amos 8:4

Listen to this

Amos is speaking to the wealthy merchants who harm those who are poor.

you who trample the needy and remove the poor of the land

This can be restated to remove the nominal adjectives “the needy” and “the poor.” Alternate translation: “you who trample those who are in need and remove those in the land that are poor” (See: [Nominal Adjectives](#))

you who trample

Harming people is spoken of as if it were stomping on people. Alternate translation: “you who harm” or “you who oppress” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the land](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [people](#)

ULT

⁴ Listen to this, you who trample the needy and remove the poor of [the land](#).

UST

⁴ Listen to your covenant crimes, rich rulers! When you cheat the poor, it is as though you people are trampling on the needy people, and you destroy the poor [people](#).

Amos 8:5

They say, “When will the new moon be over, so we can sell grain again? When will the Sabbath day be over, so that we can sell wheat?”

The merchants use these question to emphasize that want to start selling their items again. This can be stated as an indirect quotation. Alternate translation: “They are always asking when the new moon will be over or when the Sabbath will be over so that can sell their grain and wheat again.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#) and [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#))

We will make the measure small and increase the price, as we cheat with false scales

The merchants would use false scales that showed that the amount of grain they were giving was greater than it really was and that the weight of the payment was less than it really was.

Translation Words - ULT

- [the new moon](#)
- [grain](#)
- [When will the Sabbath day be over](#)
- [wheat](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the new moon festival](#)
- [our grain](#)
- [the Sabbath](#)
- [our wheat](#)

ULT

⁵ They say, “When will [the new moon](#) be over, so we can sell [grain](#) again? [When will the Sabbath day be over](#), so that we can sell [wheat](#)? We will make the measure small and increase the price, as we cheat with false scales.

UST

⁵ You habitually say, “We wish that [the new moon festival](#) would end soon, in order that we may sell [our grain](#). We wish that [the Sabbath](#) would end soon, in order that we may sell [our wheat](#).— When we sell it, we can charge a big price for it, and we can cheat people by using scales that do not weigh correctly.

Amos 8:6

the needy for a pair of sandals

The words “and buy” are understood. Alternate translation: “buy the needy for a pair of sandals” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [wheat](#)
- [with silver](#)
- [a pair of sandals](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [wheat](#)
- [with the little amount of silver](#)
- [a pair of sandals](#)

ULT

⁶ This is so we can sell bad [wheat](#), buy the poor [with silver](#), and the needy for [a pair of sandals](#).”

UST

⁶ We will sell [wheat](#) that is no good. Those who are needy and poor and who do not have money to buy things, we will make them our slaves by buying them [with the little amount of silver](#) with which we could buy [a pair of sandals](#)!”

Amos 8:7

Yahweh has sworn by the pride of Jacob

Here “pride of Jacob” is a title for Yahweh. Also “Jacob” represents his descendants, the Israelites. Alternate translation: “Yahweh has sworn by himself, saying” or “Yahweh, of whom the Israelites are so proud, has sworn” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [has sworn](#)
- [Jacob](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh...I...I](#)
- [has declared](#)
- [am the God you should worship](#)

ULT

⁷ [Yahweh has sworn](#) by the pride of [Jacob](#), “Surely I will never forget any of their actions.”

UST

⁷ [Yahweh has declared](#), “I am the God you should worship. Surely I will never forget the evil things that you have done.”

Amos 8:8

Will not the land quake for this, and every one who lives in it mourn?

Amos uses a question to emphasize that these things will certainly happen. Alternate translation: "Yahweh will cause the land to shake, and every one who lives in it will mourn." (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

All of it will rise up like the Nile River ... like the river of Egypt

Amos compares the rising and sinking of the waters of the Nile River to how Yahweh will cause the land to shake when he judges the people. (See: [Simile](#))

river of Egypt

This is another name for the Nile River.

Translation Words - ULT

- the land
- quake
- and
- Egypt

Translation Words - UST

- your country
- will...soon tremble
- and...will mourn
- like the Nile River

ULT

⁸ Will not [the land quake](#) for this, [and](#) every one who lives in it mourn? All of it will rise up like the Nile River, and it will be tossed about and settle again, like the river of [Egypt](#).

UST

⁸ Because of those evil things, [your country](#) will certainly [soon tremble](#), and everyone who lives there [will mourn](#). It will repeatedly rise and fall [like the Nile River](#) whose floodwaters overflow its banks and then recede.

Amos 8:9

It will come in that day

Alternate translation: "It will happen at that time"

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Lord](#)

ULT

⁹ "It will come in that day— this is the declaration of [the Lord](#) Yahweh— that I will make the sun set at noon, and I will darken the earth at daylight.

UST

⁹ Yahweh [the Lord](#) has declared this will happen: "The time is coming soon when I will bring judgment. I will cause the sun to set at noontime, and the entire earth will be dark in the daytime.

Amos 8:10

have baldness on every head

A person shaves his head to show that he is grieving. Alternate translation: “cause you all to shave your heads” (See: [Symbolic Action](#))

like mourning for an only son

It is understood that the only son has died. Alternate translation: “like mourning for an only son who has died” (See: [Ellipsis](#))

a bitter day to its end

Terrible and sad things happening during a day is spoken of as if the day had a bitter taste. Alternate translation: “everything that happens at that time will cause you great sorrow” (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [your festivals](#)
- [sackcloth](#)
- [head](#)
- [I will make it](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [your religious celebrations](#)
- [rough sackcloth](#)
- [shave your heads](#)
- [I will cause that time to be](#)

ULT

¹⁰ I will turn [your festivals](#) into mourning and all your songs into lamentation. I will make all of you wear [sackcloth](#) and have baldness on every [head](#). [I will make it](#) like mourning for an only son, and a bitter day to its end.

UST

¹⁰ I will cause [your religious celebrations](#) to become times when you mourn; instead of singing, everyone will be weeping. Because of what I will do, all of you will wear [rough sackcloth](#) and [shave your heads](#) to show that you are sorrowing. [I will cause that time to be](#) like when people mourn after an only son has died. All of you will be very sad all of that time.”

Amos 8:11

the days are coming

This speaks of a future time as if “days are coming.” Alternate translation: “there will be a time” or “in the future” (See: [Metaphor](#))

when I will send a famine in the land ... but for hearing the words of Yahweh

Yahweh refusing to give messages when the people want to hear from him is spoken of as if there would be a famine of his words. Alternate translation: “when I will cause something like a famine in the land ... but for hearing the words of Yahweh” (See: [Metaphor](#))

the words of Yahweh

This can be stated in first person. Alternate translation: “words from me, Yahweh” or “my messages” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)
- [a famine](#)
- [a famine](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Lord](#)
- [something to be very scarce](#)
- [a time when there is no](#)
- [from me](#)

ULT

11 Behold, the days are coming— this is the declaration of [the Lord](#) Yahweh— when I will send [a famine](#) in the land, not [a famine](#) for bread, nor of thirst for water; but for hearing the words of [Yahweh](#).

UST

11 Yahweh [the Lord](#) declares this: “Behold, It will soon be the time when I will cause [something to be very scarce](#) throughout the country. But it will not be [a time when there is no](#) food or water; it will instead be a time when there will be no messages [from me](#) for anyone to hear.

Amos 8:12

They will stagger from sea to sea; they will run from the north to the east to seek the word of Yahweh

Here “sea to sea” and “the north to the east” represent all of the land of Israel. Alternate translation: “They will wander here and there and search all over for the word of Yahweh” (See: [Merism](#))

from sea to sea

This implies the Dead Sea in the south and the Mediterranean Sea in the west. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [to seek](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [searching for](#)
- [from me](#)

ULT

¹² They will stagger from sea to sea; they will run from the north to the east [to seek](#) the word of [Yahweh](#), but they will not find it.

UST

¹² People will stagger from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, and wander from the north to the east, [searching for](#) a message [from me](#), but there will not be any.

Amos 8:13

In that day

Alternate translation: "At that time"

faint

to lose all strength

Translation Words - ULT

- [the...virgins](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [young women](#)

ULT

¹³ In that day the beautiful [virgins](#) and the young men will faint from thirst.

UST

¹³ At that time, even beautiful [young women](#) and strong young men will faint because they will be very thirsty.

Amos 8:14

by the sin of Samaria

Here “sin” represents the false god the people worship in Samaria.
Alternate translation: “by the false god of Samaria” (See: [Metonymy](#))

As your god lives, Dan

This is a way of making a solemn oath. The people declare that they believe the god of Dan is certainly alive to emphasize that they will certainly do what they promise to do.

As the way to Beersheba exists

This is probably a reference to the roads that pilgrims would take to Beersheba in order to worship idols there. Again, this is a way of making a solemn oath. They state that the way to Beersheba certainly exists in order to emphasize that they will certainly do what they promise to do.

they will fall

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “they will die” (See: [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [by the sin of](#)
- [Samaria](#)
- [your god](#)
- [As...lives](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [they will fall](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [using the name of their shameful god of](#)
- [Samaria](#)
- [using the name of](#)
- [the god of](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [Beersheba](#)
- [they will all die](#)

ULT

14 Those who swear [by the sin of Samaria](#) ^[1] and say, ‘As [your god lives](#), Dan,’ and, ‘As the way to [Beersheba](#) exists’— ^[2] [they will fall](#) and never rise again.”

8:14 ^[1], some versions have .

8:14 ^[2], where this might refer to what people going to worship Beersheba’s idols might have said. However, some versions change the Hebrew text to read . Here “loved one” stands for an idol worshiped in Beersheba.

UST

14 Those who make oaths [using the name of their shameful god of Samaria](#), and those who solemnly promise to do something [using the name of the god of Dan](#), and those who swear using the name of the god of [Beersheba](#)— [they will all die](#); they will never get up again.”

Amos 9

Amos 9 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is written in poetic form and continues to show the awesome and terrible judgment of Yahweh on his people. In verse 11, the writer writes about the forgiveness and mercy of God on the kingdom of Israel. (See: [judge](#), [judgment](#), [people of God](#) and [forgive](#), [forgiven](#), [forgiveness](#), [pardon](#), [pardoned](#) and [mercy](#), [merciful](#))

Special concepts in this chapter

“The declaration of Yahweh”

This phrase is used to introduce prophecy. It highlights what God is proclaiming. Try to remain consistent in translating this phrase throughout the book. (See: [prophet](#), [prophecy](#), [prophesy](#), [seer](#), [prophetess](#))

Amos 9:1

General Information:

Yahweh shows Amos another vision.

Strike the tops ... Break them

It is uncertain to whom Yahweh is speaking these commands.

Strike the tops of the pillars so that the foundations will shake

It is implied that Yahweh is speaking about the pillars and foundations of a temple. (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

so that the foundations will shake

Here “foundations” represents the whole temple. Alternate translation: “so that the whole temple will shake” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

Break them in pieces on all of their heads

Here “heads” represents the whole person. Alternate translation: “Break the pillars so that the temple falls on all of the people and kills them” (See: [Synecdoche](#))

I will kill the last of them with the sword

Here “sword” represents an army attacking with their weapons. Alternate translation: “I will send an enemy army to kill the rest of them” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)
- [the altar](#)
- [the foundations](#)
- [on all of their heads](#)
- [I will kill](#)
- [with the sword](#)
- [will escape](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [him](#)
- [the altar](#)
- [the building...and the foundation](#)
- [who are inside](#)
- [I will kill](#)
- [with the sword](#)
- [will escape](#)

ULT

¹ I saw [the Lord](#) standing beside [the altar](#), and he said, “Strike the tops of the pillars so that [the foundations](#) will shake. Break them in pieces [on all of their heads](#), and [I will kill](#) the last of them [with the sword](#). Not one of them will get away, not one of them [will escape](#).”

UST

¹ The Lord appeared to me in another vision. I saw [him](#) standing next to [the altar](#). He said, “Strike the temple pillars until they fall down, so that [the building](#) collapses [and the foundation](#) shakes. Shatter them so that the pieces crush all the people [who are inside](#). Anyone who lives [I will kill with the sword](#); No one will succeed in running away; no one [will escape](#).”

Amos 9:2

Though they dig into Sheol, there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to heaven, there I will bring them down

Yahweh uses an exaggerated image of people fleeing to Sheol or heaven to try to escape being killed. Here “Sheol” and “heaven” are a merism that represents all places. Alternate translation: “Even if they were to flee to Sheol or to heaven, they would not be able to escape me” (See: [Hyperbole](#) and [Merism](#))

there my hand will take them

Here “hand” represents Yahweh’s power. Alternate translation: “I will pull them up from there” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [my hand](#)
- [to heaven](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [I](#)
- [the sky](#)

ULT

² Though they dig into Sheol, there [my hand](#) will take them. Though they climb up [to heaven](#), there I will bring them down.

UST

² If, in trying to escape, they dig deep pits in the ground, even all the way to the place of the dead, [I](#) will grab them from there. Or, if they try to climb up to [the sky](#), from there I will seize them.

Amos 9:3

Though they hide on the top of Carmel ... Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea

Yahweh gives an exaggerated image of the people fleeing to the top of mount Carmel or to the bottom of the sea to escape being killed. Here “top of Carmel” and “bottom of the sea” are a merism that represents all places. Alternate translation: “Even if they were to hide on the top of Carmel ... Even if they tried to go the bottom sea, thinking that I could not see them” (See: [Hyperbole](#) and [Merism](#))

serpent

an unknown fierce sea animal, not the snake in the garden of Eden and not a common snake

Translation Words - ULT

- on the top of
- will I give orders to

Translation Words - UST

- to the top of
- I will command

ULT

³ Though they hide on the top of Carmel, there I will search and take them. Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea, there will I give orders to the serpent, and it will bite them.

UST

³ If they go to the top of Mount Carmel to escape, I will search for them and seize them. If they try to hide from me at the bottom of the sea, I will command the huge sea monster to devour them there.

Amos 9:4

Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Though enemies capture them and force them to go to a foreign land" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them

Here "sword" represents their enemies. Alternate translation: "there I will cause their enemies to kill them" (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will keep my eyes on them for harm and not for good

Here "eyes" represents seeing. The phrase "keep my eyes on them" is an idiom that means to watch closely. Alternate translation: "I will watch closely and make sure only bad things happen to them and not good things" (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [they go](#)
- [into captivity](#)
- [by their enemies](#)
- [will I give orders to](#)
- [I will keep](#)
- [for good](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [their enemies](#)
- [capture them...force them](#)
- [to go](#)
- [I will command](#)
- [I am determined](#)
- [to help](#)

ULT

⁴ Though [they go into captivity](#), driven [by their enemies](#) before them, there [will I give orders to](#) the sword, and it will kill them. [I will keep](#) my eyes on them for harm and not [for good](#)."

UST

⁴ If [their enemies capture them](#) and [force them to go](#) to other countries, [I will command](#) that they be killed there with swords. [I am determined](#) to destroy them, not [to help](#) them."

Amos 9:5

all of it will rise up like the River, and sink again like the river of Egypt

Here “the River” and “river of Egypt” both refer to the Nile river. Yahweh causing the land to shake violently is compared to the waters of the Nile river rising and sinking. (See: [Simile](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [mourn](#)
- [Egypt](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [and...and...mourn for them](#)
- [like water in the Nile River](#)

ULT

⁵ The Lord Yahweh of hosts touches the land and it melts; all who live in it [mourn](#); all of it will rise up like the River, and sink again like the river of [Egypt](#).

UST

⁵ When Yahweh, commander of the angel armies, touches the earth, it melts, and all over the earth many people die, and the others [mourn for them](#). It is as though Yahweh causes the earth repeatedly to rise and fall [like water in the Nile River](#) rises and falls.

Amos 9:6

he who builds his steps in the heavens

These are probably the steps that ancient people imagined led up to God's palace in the heavens. However, some modern versions wish to read a different Hebrew word meaning "palace" or "rooms." Here "his steps" probably is a metonym for God's palace. (See: [Metonymy](#))

has established his vault over the earth

Here "vault" refers to the sky which biblical writers described as being a dome over the earth. Alternate translation: "he sets the sky over the earth" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

He calls for the waters of the sea ... on the surface of the earth

This represents God causing the sea water to fall on the earth as rain. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:8](#). Alternate translation: "He takes the waters of the sea and makes them rain down on the surface of the earth" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Yahweh is his name

By declaring his name, Yahweh is declaring his power and authority to do these things. See how you translated this in [Amos 5:8](#).

Translation Words - ULT

- [in the heavens](#)
- [has established](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [the surface of](#)
- [Yahweh](#)
- [is his name](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [in heaven](#)
- [sets the sky to be](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [the earth](#)
- [His name is](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

6 It is he who builds his steps [in the heavens](#), and [has established](#) his vault over [the earth](#). He calls for the waters of the sea, and pours them out on [the surface of the earth](#), [Yahweh is his name](#).

UST

6 He builds his beautiful palace [in heaven](#) and [sets the sky to be](#) like a dome over [the earth](#). He scoops up the water from the ocean and puts it into clouds, and then empties the clouds onto [the earth](#). [His name is Yahweh](#).

Amos 9:7

Are you not like the people of Cush to me,... Israel—this ... declaration—did I not bring up Israel ... the Philistines ... the Arameans from Kir?

Yahweh uses a question to emphasize that the people of Israel are no more special to him than the people of Cush, the Philistines, and the Arameans. Alternate translation: “You people of Israel, you are certainly no more important to me than the people of Cush—this ... declaration—I brought up Israel ... the Philistines ... the Arameans from Kir.” (See: [Rhetorical Question](#))

this is Yahweh’s declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated these words in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what Yahweh has declared” or “this is what I, Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

Kir

See how you translated the name of this place in [Amos 1:5](#).

Translation Words - ULT

- [like the sons of](#)
- [sons of](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [Yahweh’s](#)
- [Egypt](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [more important...the people of](#)
- [You people of...than](#)
- [Israel](#)
- [your ancestors](#)
- [Egypt](#)

ULT

⁷ “Are you not [like the sons of](#) Cush to me, [sons of Israel](#)— this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration— did I not bring up [Israel](#) out of the land of [Egypt](#), the Philistines from Crete, and the Arameans from Kir?”

UST

⁷ [Yahweh](#) has declared, “[You people of Israel](#), you are certainly now no [more important](#) to me [than the people of](#) Ethiopia. I brought [your ancestors](#) here from [Egypt](#), but I also brought the people of Philistia from the Island of Crete, and I brought the people of Aram from the region of Kir.”

Amos 9:8

the eyes of the Lord Yahweh are on the sinful kingdom

Here “eyes” represents seeing. Also, Yahweh speaks of himself in third person. Alternate translation: “I, the Lord Yahweh, see that the people of this kingdom are very sinful” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [First, Second or Third Person](#))

I will destroy it from the face of the earth

The idiom “from the face of the earth” means “completely.” Alternate translation: “I will completely destroy this kingdom” (See: [Idiom](#))

the house of Jacob

Here “house” represents a family. And, “Jacob” represents his descendants. Alternate translation: “the descendants of Jacob” (See: [Metonymy](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the Lord](#)
- [the face of](#)
- [the house of](#)
- [Jacob](#)
- [Yahweh's](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the Lord](#)
- [your](#)
- [all the descendants](#)
- [of Jacob](#)
- [Yahweh](#)

ULT

⁸ Behold, the eyes of [the Lord](#) Yahweh are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from [the face of](#) the earth, except that I will not totally destroy [the house of Jacob](#)— this is [Yahweh's](#) declaration.

UST

⁸ Take note! I, Yahweh [the Lord](#), have seen just how sinful you wealthy landowners and nobles are in the kingdom of Israel, so I will destroy you and [your](#) kingdom. However, I will not completely destroy [all the descendants of Jacob](#).“ [Yahweh](#) has declared that this will certainly happen.

Amos 9:9

the house of Israel

Here “house” represents the people. Alternate translation: “the people of Israel” (See: [Metonymy](#))

I will shake the house of Israel ... as one shakes grain in a sieve, so that not the smallest stone will fall to the ground

The picture here is of grain falling through the sieve and stones being kept out. The idea is that Yahweh will remove all of the sinful people from Israel. (See: [Simile](#))

sieve

a surface with many small holes that allow small things to pass through and keep larger things from passing through

Translation Words - ULT

- I
- will give a command
- the house of
- Israel
- the nations
- to the ground

Translation Words - UST

- I
- will send my judgment
- the people of
- Israel for their sins
- nations
- will survive

ULT

⁹ For, behold, I will give a command, and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations, as one shakes grain in a sieve, so that not the smallest stone will fall to the ground.

UST

⁹ Take note! Because you treated your fellow person unjustly, I will send my judgment. I will punish the people of Israel for their sins, along with the other nations. My judgment will be thorough; not one wicked person will survive.

Amos 9:10

All the sinners of my people will die by the sword

Here "sword" represents their enemies. Alternate translation: "Enemies will kill all the sinners of my people" (See: [Metonymy](#))

Disaster will not overtake or meet us

Experiencing disaster is spoken of as disaster could overtake or meet someone. Alternate translation: "We will not experience disaster" or "Bad things will not happen to us" (See: [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [my people](#)
- [by the sword](#)
- [Disaster](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [From among my people](#)
- [evil](#)
- [with their swords](#)

ULT

¹⁰ All the sinners of [my people](#) will die [by the sword](#), those who say, 'Disaster will not overtake or meet us.'

UST

¹⁰ [From among my people](#), all you sinful people who say, 'We will not experience disasters; nothing [evil](#) will happen to us,' your enemies will kill you [with their swords](#).'

Amos 9:11

In that day

Alternate translation: "At that time"

I will raise up the tent of David that has fallen

Causing the people of Israel to be great again is spoken of as if David's kingdom were a tent that fell down and Yahweh will set it back up. Alternate translation: "David's kingdom will be like tent that has fallen down, but I will raise it back up again" (See: [Metaphor](#))

close up its breaches

Alternate translation: "I will repair its walls"

I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old

Alternate translation: "I will rebuild its ruins and make it strong like it was long ago"

breaches

parts of a wall that have fallen down

Translation Words - ULT

- [David](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [King David ruled](#)

ULT

11 In that day I will raise up the tent of [David](#) that has fallen, and close up its breaches. I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old,

UST

11 "The kingdom over which [King David ruled](#) has been destroyed, like a house that collapsed and then became ruins. But some day I will cause it to be a kingdom again. I will cause it to prosper again just like it did previously.

Amos 9:12

the remnant of Edom

Alternate translation: “the remaining part of Edom’s territory”

all the nations that are called by my name

Here “name” represents Yahweh. The idiom “called by my name” means they once belonged to Yahweh. This means that in the past the people had conquered and taken control of these territories. Alternate translation: “all the nations that once belonged to me” or “all the nations that I caused the people of Israel to conquer in the past” (See: [Metonymy](#) and [Idiom](#) and [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [the remnant of](#)
- [the nations](#)
- [are called by](#)
- [my name](#)
- [Yahweh’s](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [the remaining part of](#)
- [among the other nations](#)
- [worships](#)
- [me](#)
- [I, Yahweh...I](#)

ULT

¹² That they may possess [the remnant of Edom](#), and all [the nations](#) that [are called by my name](#) after them— this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration—he does this.

UST

¹² The result will be that your kingdom will include [the remaining part of](#) the region of Edom, and your kingdom will include anyone [among the other nations](#) who [worships me](#). [I, Yahweh](#), have declared that I will do these things, and [I](#) will certainly cause them to happen.

Amos 9:13

Look

The writer is telling the reader that he is going to say something surprising. Your language may have a way of doing this.

the days will come ... when the plowman

A future time is spoken of as if “days will come.” Alternate translation: “there will be a time ... when the plowman” or “in the future ... the plowman” (See: [Metaphor](#))

when the plowman ... him who plants seed

These are two images of Yahweh restoring prosperity in Israel. This means grain will grow faster than the people can harvest it, and there will be so many grapes, those crushing the grapes will still be working when farmers start planting more vineyards.

this is Yahweh’s declaration

Yahweh speaks of himself by name to express the certainty of what he is declaring. See how you translated this in [Amos 2:11](#). Alternate translation: “this is what Yahweh has declared” or “this is what I, Yahweh, have declared” (See: [First, Second or Third Person](#))

The mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will flow with it

These two lines mean basically the same thing. The huge amount of grapes and wine in Israel is spoken of as if wine flows down the hills and mountains. (See: [Parallelism](#) and [Metaphor](#))

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh’s](#)
- [grapes](#)
- [seed](#)
- [sweet wine](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [Yahweh](#)
- [the grapes](#)
- [the following season](#)
- [new wine...the wine presses](#)

ULT

¹³ Behold, the days will come—this is [Yahweh’s](#) declaration— when the plowman will overtake the reaper, and the treader of [grapes](#) will overtake him who plants [seed](#). The mountains will drip [sweet wine](#), and all the hills will flow with it.

UST

¹³ [Yahweh](#) has declared this: “Hear this! The time is coming when the harvest will be so plentiful! The reaper will still be harvesting crops when the plowman comes to till the field the following season. And, the grape-treaders will still be juicing [the grapes](#) when the planter comes [the following season](#). The peace and prosperity will be so abundant that [new wine](#) will overflow and spill out of [the wine presses](#) onto the hillsides and run down every slope.

Amos 9:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Translation Words - ULT

- I will bring back
- from captivity
- my people
- Israel
- ruined
- vineyards
- their wine
- and eat
- their fruit

Translation Words - UST

- I will cause...to prosper
- Israelite
- produce which grows
- my...people
- again
- which your enemies destroyed
- vineyards...in them
- wine made from the grapes that grow
- and eat

ULT

¹⁴ I will bring back from captivity my people Israel. They will build the ruined cities and inhabit them, they will plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they will make gardens and eat their fruit.

UST

¹⁴ I will cause you, my Israelite people, to prosper again. You will rebuild your towns which your enemies destroyed, and you will live there. You will plant vineyards and drink wine made from the grapes that grow in them. You will plant gardens and eat produce which grows in them.

Amos 9:15

I will plant them upon their land, and they will never again be uprooted from the land

Bringing the people back to their land and keeping them safe from enemies is spoken of as if Israel were a plant that Yahweh would put in the ground and not let anyone pull the plant up from the ground. Alternate translation: "I will cause them to live in the land forever like a plant that is never uprooted" (See: [Metaphor](#))

they will never again be uprooted from the land

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "no one will ever again uproot them from the land" (See: [Active or Passive](#))

uprooted

for a plant and its roots to be pulled out of the ground

Translation Words - ULT

- [Yahweh](#)
- [your God](#)

Translation Words - UST

- [I, Yahweh](#)
- [your covenant-keeping God](#)

ULT

¹⁵ I will plant them upon their land, and they will never again be uprooted from the land that I have given them," says [Yahweh your God](#).

UST

¹⁵ I will enable you to live in your land again, the land that I gave to your ancestors; never again will your enemies force you to leave it. This will surely happen because [I, Yahweh your covenant-keeping God](#), have declared it."



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Version 28

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: [Amos 1:11](#); [1:15](#); [3:9](#); [5:9](#))

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: [Amos 1:1](#); [1:15](#); [2:8](#); [2:11](#); [3:14](#); [4:3](#); [4:7](#); [4:11](#); [5:2](#); [6:11](#); [7:9](#); [7:17](#); [9:4](#); [9:15](#))

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: [Amos 1:1](#); [1:11](#); [2:15](#); [3:2](#); [3:6](#); [3:7](#); [3:9](#); [3:11](#); [3:12](#); [4:5](#); [4:7](#); [4:10](#); [4:12](#); [Notes](#); [5:3](#); [5:11](#); [5:12](#); [5:15](#); [6:6](#); [6:8](#); [6:9](#); [6:10](#); [8:12](#); [9:1](#); [9:6](#); [9:12](#))

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker's exact words. In the example below, John would have said "I" when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John's words, uses the word "I" in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John's exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: "".

- John said, "I do not know at what time I will arrive."

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

- John said that he did not know at what time he would arrive.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one than the other. There may be a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or as an indirect quotation.

Examples From the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have marked in bold the words that are quoted.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."
(Luke 5:14 ULT)

- Indirect quote: He commanded him **to tell no one**,
- Direct quote: but told him, "**Go, show yourself to the priest ...**"

And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 ULT)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees **when the kingdom of God was coming**,
- Direct quote: he answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you.**"
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, '**Look, here it is!**' or, '**There it is!**'

This page answers the question: *What are direct and indirect quotations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-quotations\]\]](#)

Translation Strategies

If the kind of quote used in the source text would work well in your language, consider using it. If the kind of quote used in that context is not natural for your language, follow these strategies.

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.
- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, **“Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”** (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him to tell no one, but **to go and show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for his cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.**

- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

And he commanded him **to tell no one**, but, “Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him, **“Tell no one.** But go and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_quotations.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-quotesinquotes\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Amos 7 General Notes; 8:5](#))

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 “use**less**.” 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 English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, “He is not unintelligent” means “He is intelligent.”
- In some languages, such as French and Spanish, two negative words in a clause do not cancel each other to become a positive. 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 double negative creates a stronger negative statement.
- In some languages, a 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, including the languages of the Bible, a double negative can produce a stronger positive meaning than a simple positive statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is very intelligent.” In this case, the double negative is actually the figure of speech called [litotes](#).

Biblical Greek can do all of the above. So to translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what each double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The Greek of John 15:5 says:

χωρὶς ἐμοῦ **οὐ** δύνασθε ποιεῖν **οὐδέν**

Without me **not** you can do **nothing**

We cannot reproduce this double negative in the English ULT because in English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one. In English, and perhaps in your language, we need to choose only one of the negatives and say either:

Without me, you can do **nothing**.

or:

Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

... in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means "in order to be fruitful."

A prophet is **not without** honor (Mark 6:4 ULT)

This means "a prophet is honored."

I do **not** want you to be **ignorant**. (1 Corinthians 12:1)

This means "I want you to be knowledgeable."

Translation Strategies

If the way that the double negative is used in the Bible is natural and has the same meaning as in your language, consider using it in the same way. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is 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 negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is 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 negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

χωρίς ἑμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν

Without me **not** you can do **nothing** (John 15:5)

Without me, you can do **nothing**.

or:

Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

...ἰώτα ἐν ἧ μία κεραία **οὐ μὴ** παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου (Matthew 5:18)

...iota one or one serif **not not** may pass away from the law

...**not even** one iota or one serif may pass away from the law

or:

...**certainly no** iota or serif may pass away from the law

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-verbs\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Amos 3:7](#))

Doublet

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or phrases that are used together and either mean the same thing or mean very close to the same thing. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Unlike Hendiadys, in which one of the words modifies the other, in a doublet the two words or phrases are equal and are used to emphasize or intensify the one idea that is expressed by the two words or phrases.

This page answers the question: *What are doublets and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

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: [Amos 5:21](#); [7:13](#))

Ellipsis

Description

An ellipsis¹ occurs when a speaker or writer leaves out one or more words that normally should be in the sentence. The speaker or writer does this because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and supply the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there. For example:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, **nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.**
(Psalm 1:5 ULT)

There is ellipsis in the second part because “nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous” is not a complete sentence. The speaker assumes that the hearer will understand what it is that sinners will not do in the assembly of the righteous by filling in the action from the previous clause. With the action filled in, the complete sentence would read:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **will sinners stand** in the assembly of the righteous.

[¹] English has a punctuation symbol which is also called an ellipsis. It is a series of three dots (...) used to indicate an intentional omission of a word, phrase, sentence or more from text without altering its original meaning. This translationAcademy article is not about the punctuation mark, but about the concept of omission of words that normally should be in the sentence.

Two Types of Ellipsis

A Relative Ellipsis happens when the reader has to supply the omitted word or words from the context. Usually the word is in the previous sentence, as in the example above.

An Absolute Ellipsis happens when the omitted word or words are not in the context, but the phrases are common enough in the language that the reader is expected to supply what is missing from this common usage or from the nature of the situation.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers who see incomplete sentences or phrases may not know that there is information missing that the writer expects them to fill in. Or readers may understand that there is information missing, but they may not know what information is missing because they do not know the original biblical language, culture, or situation as the original readers did. In this case, they may fill in the wrong information. Or readers may misunderstand the ellipsis if they do not use ellipsis in the same way in their language.

Examples From the Bible

Relative Ellipsis

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox.** (Psalm 29:6 ULT)

The writer wants his words to be few and to make good poetry. The full sentence with the information filled in would be:

This page answers the question: *What is ellipsis ?*

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: [Amos 5:16](#); [6:11](#); [7:2](#); [8:6](#); [8:10](#))

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: [Amos 2:7](#))

First, Second or Third Person

Normally a speaker refers to himself as “I” and the person he is speaking to as “you.” Sometimes in the Bible a speaker refers to himself or to the person he is speaking to with terms other than “I” or “you.”

Description

- First person — This is how a speaker normally refers to himself. English uses the pronouns “I” and “we.” (Also: me, my, mine; us, our, ours)
- Second person — This is how a speaker normally refers to the person or people he is speaking to. English uses the pronoun “you.” (Also: your, yours)
- Third person — This is how a speaker refers to someone else. English uses the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it,” and “they.” (Also: him, his, her, hers, its; them, their, theirs) Noun phrases like “the man” or “the woman” are also third person.

This page answers the question: *What are first, second, and third person, and how do I translate when a third person form does not refer to the third person?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-explicitinfo\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-pronouns\]\]](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses the third person to refer to himself or to the people he is speaking to. Readers might think that the speaker was referring to someone else. They might not understand that he meant “I” or “you.”

Examples From the Bible

Sometimes people used the third person instead of “I” or “me” to refer to themselves.

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34 ULT)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and used “his.” He was calling himself Saul’s servant in order to show his humility before Saul.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said,
“... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “his.” He did this to emphasize that he is God, and he is powerful.

Sometimes people use the third person instead of “you” or “your” to refer to the person or people they are speaking to.

Abraham answered and said, “Look, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes!” (Genesis 18:27 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to the Lord, and referred to the Lord as “My Lord” rather than as “you.” He did this to show his humility before God.

So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

After saying “each of you,” Jesus used the third person “his” instead of “your.”

Translation Strategies

If using the third person to mean “I” or “you” would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34)

But David said to Saul, “**I, your servant,** used to keep **my** father’s sheep.”

- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **mine**? Can you thunder with a voice like **mine**?”

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **your** brother from your heart.

Next we recommend you learn about:
 [[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-you]]

(Go back to: [Amos 2:11](#); [2:16](#); [3:13](#); [3:15](#); [4:3](#); [4:5](#); [4:6](#); [4:8](#); [4:10](#); [4:12](#); [4:13](#); [6:8](#); [6:14](#); [8:11](#); [9:7](#); [9:8](#); [9:13](#))

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: [Amos 3:12](#); [3:15](#); [4:7](#); [5:3](#))

Go and Come

Description

This page answers the question: *What do I do if the word "go" or "come" is confusing in a certain sentence?*

Different languages have different ways of determining whether to use the words "go" or "come" and whether to use the words "take" or "bring" when talking about motion. For example, when saying that they are approaching a person who has called them, English speakers say "I'm coming," while Spanish speakers say "I'm going." You will need to study the context in order to understand what is meant by the words "go" and "come" (and also "take" and "bring"), and then translate those words in a way that your readers will understand which direction people are moving in.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of talking about motion. The biblical languages or your source language may use the words "go" and "come" or "take" and "bring" differently than your language uses them. If these words are not translated in the way that is natural in your language, your readers may be confused about which direction people are moving.

Examples From the Bible

Yahweh said to Noah, "**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark." (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

In some languages, this would lead people to think that Yahweh was in the ark.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you. Then you will be free from my oath. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to his servant. Abraham's relatives lived far away from where he and his servant were standing and he wanted his servant to **go** to them, not **come** toward Abraham.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14a ULT)

Moses is speaking to the people in the wilderness. They had not yet gone into the land that God was giving them. In some languages, it would make more sense to say, "When you have **gone** into the land ..."

They **brought** him up to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (Luke 2:22b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to say that they **took** or **carried** Jesus to the temple.

Then see, there was a man whose name was Jairus, and he was a leader of the synagogue. And falling at the feet of Jesus, he begged him to come to his house. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

The man was not at his house when he spoke to Jesus. He wanted Jesus to **go** with him to his house.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to ask what did you come out to see.

Translation Strategies

If the word used in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other strategies.

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.
- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

But you will be free from my oath if you **go** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you come out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14 ULT)

“When you have **arrived** in the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ...”

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark ...” (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Enter**, you and all your household, into the ark ...”

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you travel out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

(Go back to: [Amos 6:1](#))

How to Translate Names

Description

The Bible contains the names of many people, groups of people, and places. Some of these names may sound strange and be hard to say. Sometimes readers may not know what a name refers to, and sometimes they may need to understand what a name means. This page will help you see how you can translate these names and how you can help people understand what they need to know about them.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate names that are new to my culture?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Translate Unknowns](#)

Meaning of names

Most names in the Bible have meaning. Most of the time, names in the Bible are used simply to identify the people and places they refer to, but sometimes the meaning of a name is especially important.

For this **Melchizedek**, king of Salem, priest of God Most High, was the one who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him. (Hebrews 7:1 ULT)

Here the writer uses the name “Melchizedek” primarily to refer to a man who had that name, and the title “king of Salem” tells us that he ruled over a certain city.

His name first indeed means “king of righteousness,” and then also “king of Salem,” that is, “king of peace.” (Hebrews 7:2b ULT)

Here the writer explains the meanings of Melchizedek’s name and title because those things tell us more about the person. Other times, the writer does not explain the meaning of a name because he expects the reader to already know the meaning. If the meaning of the name is important to understand the passage, you can include the meaning in the text or in a footnote.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the names in the Bible. They may not know whether a name refers to a person or place or something else.
- Readers may need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand the passage.
- Some names may have different sounds or combinations of sounds that are not used in your language or are unpleasant to say in your language. For strategies to address this problem, see Borrow Words.
- Some people and places in the Bible have two names. Readers may not realize that two names refer to the same person or place.

Examples From the Bible

Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** ... fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

Readers might not know that “Jordan” is the name of a river, “Jericho” is the name of a city, and “Amorites” is the name of a group of people.

She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

Readers may not understand the second sentence if they do not know that “Beer Lahai Roi” means “Well of the Living One who sees me.”

And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

Readers may not understand why she said this if they do not know that the name Moses sounds like the Hebrew words “pull out.”

Saul was in agreement with his execution. (Acts 8:1a ULT)

But when the apostles, Barnabas and **Paul**, heard of it, they tore their clothing. (Acts 14:14a ULT)

Readers may not know that the names Saul and Paul refer to the same person.

Translation Strategies

- (1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.
- (2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.
- (3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.
- (4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently.
- (5) Or if a person or place has two different names, then use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If readers cannot easily understand from the context what kind of a thing a name refers to, you can add a word to clarify it.

Then you crossed over the **Jordan** and came to **Jericho**, and the men of Jericho, and the **Amorites** ... fought against you, but I gave them into your hand. (Joshua 24:11 ULT)

You went over the **Jordan River** and came to the **city of Jericho**. The men of Jericho fought against you, along with **the tribe of the Amorites**.

At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Leave and go away from here, because **Herod** wants to kill you.” (Luke 13:31 ULT)

At that hour, certain Pharisees approached, saying to him, “Go and leave here, because **King Herod** wants to kill you.”

- (2) If readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, copy the name and tell about its meaning either in the text or in a footnote.

And she called his name **Moses** and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.” (Exodus 2:10b ULT)

She called his name **Moses (which sounds like ‘drawn out’)**, and she said, “For out of the water I drew him.”

(3) Or if readers need to understand the meaning of a name in order to understand what is said about it, and that name is used only once, translate the meaning of the name instead of copying the name.

She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Beer Lahai Roi**. (Genesis 16:13b-14a ULT)

She said, “Do I really continue to see, even after he has seen me?” Therefore, the well was called **Well of the Living One who sees me**.

(4) If a person or place has two different names, use one name most of the time and the other name only when the text tells about the person or place having more than one name or when it says something about why the person or place was given that name. Write a footnote when the source text uses the name that is used less frequently. For example, Paul is called “Saul” before Acts 13 and “Paul” after Acts 13. You could translate his name as “Paul” all of the time, except in Acts 13:9 where it talks about him having both names.

... a young man named **Saul**. (Acts 7:58b ULT)

... a young man named **Paul** 1

The footnote would look like:

[1] Most versions say “Saul” here, but most of the time in the Bible he is called “Paul.”

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

(5) Or if a person or place has two names, use whatever name is given in the source text, and add a footnote that gives the other name. For example, you could write “Saul” where the source text has “Saul” and “Paul” where the source text has “Paul.”

a young man named **Saul** (Acts 7:58 ULT)

a young man named **Saul**

The footnote would look like:

[1] This is the same man who is called Paul beginning in Acts 13.

Then later in the story, you could translate this way:

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit; (Acts 13:9)

But **Saul**, who is also called **Paul**, was filled with the Holy Spirit;

Then after the story has explained the name change, you could translate this way.

It came about in Iconium that **Paul** and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue (Acts 14:1 ULT)

It came about in Iconium that **Paul**¹ and Barnabas entered together into the synagogue

The footnote would look like:

^[1] This is the same man who was called Saul before Acts 13.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate]]

(Go back to: [Introduction to Amos](#); [Amos 1:1](#); [1:4](#); [1:5](#); [1:12](#); [2:2](#); [4:3](#); [Notes](#); [5:26](#); [6:2](#); [6:13](#); [7:10](#))

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: [Amos 1:11](#); [2:9](#); [9:2](#); [9:3](#))

Hypothetical Situations

Consider these phrases: “If the sun stopped shining ...” “What if the sun stopped shining ...” “Suppose the sun stopped shining ...” and “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. Hypothetical expressions occur often in the Bible. You (the translator) need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen and so that they will understand why the event was imagined.

This page answers the question: *What is a hypothetical situation?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, are not happening now, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions comprise a phrase that starts with “if.”)

- If he had lived to be 100 years old, he would have seen his grandson’s grandson. (But he did not.)
- If he lived to be 100 years old, he would still be alive today. (But he is not.)
- If he lives to be 100 years old, he will see his grandson’s grandson. (But he probably will not.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible and understand that they are unreal.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

Examples From the Bible

Hypothetical Situations in the Past

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! **If the mighty deeds had been done** in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, **they would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matthew 11:21 ULT)

Here in Matthew 11:21, Jesus said that **if** the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles, and they did not repent. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles and yet did not repent.

Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, **if you had been here, my brother would not have died.**” (John 11:21 ULT)

Martha said this to express her wish that Jesus would have come sooner so that her brother would not have died. But Jesus did not come sooner and her brother did die.

Hypothetical Situations in the Present

And no man puts new wine into old wineskins. **But if he did do that, the new wine would burst the wineskins, and it would be spilled out, and the wineskins would be destroyed.** (Luke 5:37 ULT)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that there are times when it is unwise to mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

Jesus said to them, “What man would there be among you, who, **if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out?**” (Matthew 12:11 ULT)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

Hypothetical Situation in the Future

Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULT)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show how bad those days will be—so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

Expressing Emotion About a Hypothetical Situation

People sometimes talk about hypothetical situations in order to express regrets and wishes. Regrets are about the past and wishes are about the present and future.

The Israelites said to them, “**If only we had died by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full.** For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3 ULT)

Here the Israelites were afraid that they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining, expressing regret that this had not happened.

I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. **I wish that you were either cold or hot!** (Revelation 3:15 ULT)

Jesus wished that the people were either hot or cold, but they are neither. He was rebuking them, expressing anger at this.

Translation Strategies

Find out how people speaking your language show:

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_hypo.

(Go back to: [Amos 6:9](#))

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: [Amos 1 General Notes](#); [1:1](#); [1:3](#); [Notes](#); [2:7](#); [2:9](#); [5:15](#); [7:12](#); [8:14](#); [9:4](#); [9:8](#); [9:12](#))

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 worshipping 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: [Amos 4:4](#); [4:5](#); [6:1](#))

Litotes

Description

Litotes is a figure of speech in which the speaker expresses a strong positive meaning by negating a word or phrase that means the opposite of the meaning that he intends. For example, someone could intend to communicate that something is extremely good by describing it as "not bad." The difference between a litotes and a **double negative** is that a litotes heightens the positive meaning beyond what a plain positive statement would do, and a double negative does not. In the example above, the literal meaning of "not bad," taken as a plain double negative, would be "acceptable" or even "good." But if the speaker intended it as a litotes, then the meaning is "very good" or "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: [Amos 1:3](#); [1:6](#); [1:9](#); [1:11](#); [1:13](#); [2:1](#); [2:4](#); [2:6](#))

Merism

Definition

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it. By referring to the extreme parts, the speaker intends to include also everything in between those parts.

“I am **the alpha and the omega**,” says the Lord God,
“the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.” (Revelation 1:8 ULT)

I am **the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end**.
(Revelation 22:13, ULT)

This page answers the question: *What does the word merism mean and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

... I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth** ..., (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

Heaven and earth is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use merism. The readers of those languages may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples From the Bible

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh’s name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

This bolded phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means “everywhere.”

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13)

The bolded phrase is merism because it speaks of old people and young people and everyone in between. It means “everyone.”

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
- (2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything**.

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

In all places, people should praise Yahweh's name.

(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth**.

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13 ULT)

He will bless **all those** who honor him, regardless of whether they are **young or old**.

(Go back to: [Amos 2:9](#); [6:11](#); [8:12](#); [9:2](#); [9:3](#))

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: Amos 1:2; 1:4; 1:5; 1:7; 1:8; 1:10; 1:12; 1:14; 2:4; 2:5; 3:6; 3:15; 4:1; 4:2; 4:6; 4:8; 4:10; 4:11; 4:13; 5:2; 5:4; 5:5; 5:6; 5:7; 5:8; 5:14; 5:18; 5:23; 6:3; 6:12; 7:8; 7:10; 7:17; 8:4; 8:10; 8:11; 9:6; 9:10; 9:11; 9:13; 9:15)

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: [Amos 1:3](#); [1:4](#); [1:5](#); [1:6](#); [1:8](#); [1:9](#); [1:11](#); [2:1](#); [2:2](#); [2:4](#); [2:6](#); [2:16](#); [3:1](#); [3:2](#); [3:10](#); [3:13](#); [3:14](#); [4:6](#); [4:8](#); [4:9](#); [4:10](#); [5:1](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [5:13](#); [5:15](#); [5:25](#); [5:26](#); [6:1](#); [6:3](#); [6:6](#); [6:8](#); [6:14](#); [7:2](#); [7:5](#); [7:9](#); [7:10](#); [7:11](#); [7:16](#); [7:17](#); [8:7](#); [8:14](#); [9:1](#); [9:2](#); [9:4](#); [9:6](#); [9:8](#); [9:9](#); [9:10](#); [9:12](#))

Nominal Adjectives

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

The rich man had huge numbers of flocks and herds. (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

He will not be rich; his wealth will not last. (Job 15:29a ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

Here is a sentence that shows that “rich” can also function as a noun.

The rich must not give more than the half shekel, and **the poor** must not give less. (Exodus 30:15b ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

Examples From the Bible

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

“The meek” here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate adjectives that act like nouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-partsofspeech]]

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **righteous people**.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

Blessed are **people who are meek**.

(Go back to: [Amos 2:6](#); [2:7](#); [2:14](#); [4:1](#); [5:9](#); [5:12](#); [8:4](#))

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: [Amos 1:1; 1:2; 1:11; 4:2; 5:20; 6:11; 6:12; 9:13](#))

Personification

Description

Personification is a figure of speech in which someone speaks of something as if it could do things that animals or people can do. People often do this because it makes it easier to talk about things that we cannot see:

Such as wisdom:

Does not Wisdom call out? (Proverbs 8:1a ULT)

Or sin:

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT)

People also use personification because it is sometimes easier to talk about people's relationships with non-human things such as wealth as if they were relationships between people.

You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

In each case, the purpose of the personification is to highlight a certain characteristic of the non-human thing. As in metaphor, the reader needs to think of the way that the thing is like a certain kind of person.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Some languages do not use personification.
- Some languages use personification only in certain situations.

Examples From the Bible

You cannot **serve** God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24b ULT)

Jesus speaks of wealth as if it were a master whom people might serve. Loving money and basing one's decisions on it is like serving it as a slave would serve his master.

Does not Wisdom **call** out? Does not Understanding **raise her voice**? (Proverbs 8:1 ULT)

The author speaks of wisdom and understanding as if they were woman who calls out to teach people. This means that they are not something hidden, but something obvious that people should pay attention to.

Translation Strategies

If the personification would be understood clearly, consider using it. If it would not be understood, here are some other ways for translating it.

- (1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.
- (2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as "like" or "as" to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.
- (3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

This page answers the question: *What is personification?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro]]

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — God speaks of sin as if it were a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.

Sin is at your door, **waiting to attack you**.

(2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — This can be translated with the word “as.”

Sin is crouching at the door, **just as a wild animal does as it waits to attack a person..**

(3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Even the **winds and the sea obey him**. (Matthew 8:27b ULT) — The men speak of the “wind and the sea” as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus, just as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.

He even **controls the winds and the sea**.

NOTE: We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of non-human things as if they had human characteristics) because the translation strategies for them are the same.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-apostrophe]]
[[rc://en/ta/man/translate/bit-part1]]

(Go back to: [Amos 3:9; 3:15](#))

Poetry

Description

Poetry is one of the ways that people use the words and sounds of their language to make their speech and writing more beautiful and to express strong emotion. Through poetry, people can communicate deeper emotion than they can through simple non-poetic forms. Poetry gives more weight and elegance to statements of truth, such as proverbs, and is also easier to remember than ordinary speech.

This page answers the question: *What is poetry and how do I translate it into my language?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-intro\]\]](#)

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-intro\]\]](#)

In poetry we commonly find:

- many figures of speech such as Apostrophe
- arrangements of clauses into particular patterns such as:
 - parallel lines (See [Parallelism](#))
 - acrostics (beginning lines with successive letters of the alphabet)
 - chiasms (in which the first line relates to the last line, the second to the next-to-last line, etc.):
 - > You should not give what is holy to the dogs,
 - >
 - >> and should not throw your pearls in front of the pigs.
 - >>
 - >> Otherwise they will trample them under their feet,
 - >
 - > and having turned, they might tear you to pieces. (Matt 7:6 ULT)

- repetition of some or all of a line:

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his hosts. Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars. (Psalm 148:2-3 ULT)

- lines of similar length:

Listen to my call to you,
Yahweh; think about my groanings.
Listen to the sound of my call, my King and my God,
for it is to you that I pray. (Psalm 5:1-2 ULT)

- the same sound used at the end or at the beginning of two or more lines:

“Twinkle, twinkle little **star**. How I wonder what you **are**.” (from an English rhyme)

- the same sound repeated many times:

“Peter, Peter, pumpkin eater” (from an English rhyme)

We also find:

- old words and expressions
- dramatic imagery
- different use of grammar — including:
 - incomplete sentences

- lack of connective words

Some places to look for poetry in your language

Songs, particularly old songs or songs used in children's games
 Religious ceremony or chants of priests or witch doctors
 Prayers, blessings, and curses
 Old legends

Elegant or fancy speech

Elegant or fancy speech is similar to poetry in that it uses beautiful language, but it does not use all of the language's features of poetry, and it does not use them as much as poetry does. Popular speakers in the language often use elegant speech, and this is probably the easiest source of text to study to find out what makes speech elegant in your language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

- Different languages use poetry for different things. If a poetic form would not communicate the same meaning in your language, you may need to write it without the poetry.
- Different languages use different poetic devices. A poetic device that conveys elegance or emotion in a biblical language may be confusing or misunderstood in another language.
- In some languages, using poetry for a particular part of the Bible would make it much more powerful.

Examples From the Bible

The Bible uses poetry for songs, teaching, and prophecy. Almost all of the books of the Old Testament have poetry in them and many of the books are completely made up of poetry.

... for you saw my affliction; you knew the distress of my soul. (Psalm 31:7b ULT)

This example of [Parallelism](#) has two lines that mean the same thing.

Yahweh, judge the nations; vindicate me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and innocent, Most High. (Psalm 7:8 ULT)

This example of parallelism shows the contrast between what David wants God to do to him and what he wants God to do to the unrighteous nations. (See [Parallelism](#).)

Keep your servant also from arrogant sins; let them not rule over me. (Psalm 19:13a ULT)

This example of personification speaks of sins as if they could rule over a person. (See [Personification](#).)

Oh, give thanks to Yahweh; for he is good,
 for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
 Oh, give thanks to the God of gods,
 for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
 Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords,
 for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

(Psalm 136:1-3 ULT)

This example repeats the phrases “give thanks” and “his covenant faithfulness endures forever.”

Translation Strategies

If the style of poetry that is used in the source text would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other ways of translating it.

- (1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry.
- (2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.
- (3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

If you use poetry it may be more beautiful.

If you use ordinary speech it may be more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the advice of the wicked, or stand in the pathway with sinners, or sit in the assembly of mockers. But his delight is in the law of Yahweh, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2 ULT)

The following are examples of how people might translate Psalm 1:1-2.

- (1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry. (The style in this example has words that sound similar at the end of each line.)

“Happy is the person not encouraged **to sin**, Disrespect for God he will not **begin**, To those who laugh at God he is **no kin**. God is his constant **delight**, He does what God says **is right**, He thinks of it all day **and night**.”

- (2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.

This is the kind of person who is truly blessed: the one who does not follow the advice of wicked people nor stop along the road to speak with sinners nor join the gathering of those who mock God. Rather, he takes great joy in Yahweh’s law, and he meditates on it day and night.

- (3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

The people who do not listen to the advice of bad people are really happy. They do not spend time with people who continually do evil things or join with those who do not respect God. Instead, they love to obey Yahweh’s law, and they think about it all the time.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/writing-symlanguage\]\]](#)

(Go back to: [Amos 1:1](#))

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: [Amos 3:3](#); [3:4](#); [3:5](#); [3:6](#); [3:8](#); [5:18](#); [5:20](#); [5:25](#); [6:2](#); [6:12](#); [6:13](#); [7:8](#); [8:2](#); [8:5](#); [8:8](#); [9:7](#))

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: [Amos 2:7](#); [2:9](#); [2:13](#); [3:12](#); [5:6](#); [5:24](#); [8:8](#); [9:5](#); [9:9](#))

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: [Amos 8:10](#))

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: [Amos 5:6; 9:1](#))

Translate Unknowns

While working to translate the Bible, you (the translator) might find yourself asking: “How do I translate words like lion, fig tree, mountain, priest, or temple when people in my culture have never seen these things and we do not have a word for them?”

This page answers the question: *How can I translate ideas that my readers are not familiar with?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/figs-sentences\]\]](#)

Description

Unknowns are things that occur in the source text that are not known to the people of your culture. The unfoldingWord® Translation Words pages and the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes will help you understand what they are. After you understand them, you will need to find ways to refer to those things so that people who read your translation will understand what they are.

They said to him, “We have nothing here except five loaves of **bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

Bread is a particular food made by mixing finely crushed grains with oil, and then cooking the mixture so that it is dry. (Grains are the seeds of a kind of grass.) In some cultures people do not have bread and do not know what it is.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the things that are in the Bible because those things are not part of their own culture.
- Readers may have difficulty understanding a text if they do not know some of the things that are mentioned in it.

Translation Principles

- Use words that are already part of your language if possible.
- Keep expressions short if possible.
- Represent God’s commands and historical facts accurately.

Examples From the Bible

So I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **jackals**. (Jeremiah 9:11a ULT)

Jackals are wild animals like dogs that live in only a few parts of the world. So they are not known in many places.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous **wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

If wolves do not live where the translation will be read, the readers may not understand that they are fierce, wild animals like dogs that attack and eat sheep.

They offered him wine mixed with **myrrh**, but he did not drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULT)

People may not know what myrrh is and that it was used as a medicine.

... to him who made **great lights** ... (Psalm 136:7a ULT)

Some languages have terms for things that give light, like the sun and fire, but they have no general term for lights.

Your sins ... will be white like **snow**. (Isaiah 1:18b ULT)

People in many parts of the world have not seen snow, but they may have seen it in pictures.

Translation Strategies

Here are ways you might translate a term that is not known in your language:

- (1) Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.
- (2) Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.
- (3) Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.
- (4) Use a word that is more general in meaning.
- (5) Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are inwardly they are **ravenous wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but **inwardly they are very hungry and dangerous animals**.

"Ravenous wolves" is part of a metaphor here, so the reader needs to know that they are very dangerous to sheep in order to understand this metaphor. (If sheep are also unknown, then you will need to also use one of the translation strategies to translate sheep, or change the metaphor to something else, using a translation strategy for metaphors. See [Translating Metaphors](#).)

"We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except five **loaves of baked grain seeds** and two fish.

- (2) Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.

Your sins ... will be white like **snow**. (Isaiah 1:18b ULT) This verse is not about snow. It uses snow in a figure of speech to help people understand how white something will be.

Your sins ... will be white like **milk**.

Your sins ... will be white like **the moon**.

- (3) Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with **myrrh**. But he refused to drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULT) — People may understand better what myrrh is if it is used with the general word “medicine.”

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with **a medicine called myrrh**. But he refused to drink it.

“We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT) — People may understand better what bread is if it is used with a phrase that tells what it is made of (seeds) and how it is prepared (crushed and baked).

We have nothing here except five loaves of **baked crushed seed bread** and two fish.

(4) Use a word that is more general in meaning.

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **jackals** (Jeremiah 9:11a ULT)

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **wild dogs**

“We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except five **loaves of baked food** and two fish.

(5) Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

... to him who made **great lights** ... (Psalm 136:7a ULT)

to him who made **the sun and the moon**

Next we recommend you learn about:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-transliterate\]\]](#)
[How to Translate Names](#)

(Go back to: [Amos 5:8](#); [6:4](#); [7:14](#))



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 31

Adam

Facts:

Adam was the first person whom God created. He and his wife Eve were made in the image of God.

- God formed Adam from dirt and breathed life into him.
- Adam's name sounds similar to the Hebrew word for "red dirt" or "ground."
- The name "Adam" is the same as the Old Testament word for "mankind" or "human being."
- All people are descendants of Adam and Eve.
- Adam and Eve disobeyed God. This separated them from God and caused sin and death to come into the world.

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

(See also: [death](#), descendant, Eve, image of God, [life](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 2:14
- Genesis 3:17
- Genesis 5:1
- Genesis 11:5
- Luke 3:38
- Romans 5:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:9** Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image to be like us."
- **1:10** This man's name was **Adam**. God planted a garden where **Adam** could live, and put him there to care for it.
- **1:12** Then God said, "It is not good for man to be alone." But none of the animals could be **Adam's** helper.
- **2:11** And God clothed **Adam** and Eve with animal skins.
- **2:12** So God sent **Adam** and Eve away from the beautiful garden.
- **49:8** When **Adam** and Eve sinned, it affected all of their descendants.
- **50:16** Because **Adam** and Eve disobeyed God and brought sin into this world, God cursed it and decided to destroy it.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0120, G00760

(Go back to: [Amos 4:13](#))

adversary, enemy

Definition:

An “adversary” is a person (or group of people) who is opposed to someone else. The term “enemy” has a similar meaning.

- Your adversary can be a person who tries to oppose or harm another person.
- When two nations fight, each can be called an “adversary” of the other.
- In the Bible, the devil is referred to as an “adversary” and an “enemy.”
- The term “adversary” may be translated as “opponent” or “enemy,” but it suggests a stronger form of opposition.

(See also: Satan)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:14
- Isaiah 9:11
- Job 6:23
- Lamentations 4:12
- Luke 12:59
- Matthew 13:25

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0341, H6146, H6887, H6862, H6965, H7790, H7854, H8130, H8324, G04760, G04800, G21890, G21900, G52270

(Go back to: [Amos 3:11](#); [5:12](#); [9:4](#))

altar

Definition:

An altar was a raised structure on which the Israelites burned animals and grains as offerings to God.

- During Bible times, simple altars were often made by forming a mound of packed-down dirt or by carefully placing large stones to form a stable pile.
- Some special box-shaped altars were made of wood overlaid with metals such as gold, brass, or bronze.
- Other people groups living near the Israelites also built altars to offer sacrifices to their gods.

(See also: altar of incense, false god, [grain offering](#), [sacrifice](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 8:20
- Genesis 22:9
- James 2:21
- Luke 11:49-51
- Matthew 5:23
- Matthew 23:19

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:14** After Noah got off the boat, he built an **altar** and sacrificed some of each kind of animal which could be used for a sacrifice.
- **5:8** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his son Isaac and laid him on an **altar**.
- **13:9** A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the **altar**.
- **16:6** He (Gideon) built a new altar dedicated to God near where the **altar** to the idol used to be and made a sacrifice to God on it.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0741, H2025, H4056, H4196, G10410, G23790

(Go back to: [Amos 2:8](#); [3:14](#); [9:1](#))

amazed, amazement, astonished, marvel, marveled, marvelous, wonder, dumbfounded

Definition:

All these terms refer to being very surprised because of something extraordinary that happened.

- Some of these words are translations of Greek expressions that mean “struck with amazement” or “standing outside of (oneself).” These expressions show how very surprised or shocked the person was feeling. Other languages might also have ways to express this.
- Usually the event that caused the wonder and amazement was a miracle, something only God could do.
- The meaning of these terms can also include feelings of confusion because what happened was totally unexpected.
- Other ways to translate these words could be “extremely surprised” or “very shocked.”
- Related words include “marvelous” (amazing, wonderful), “amazement,” and “astonishment.”
- In general, these terms are positive and express that the people were happy about what had happened.

(See also: miracle, sign)

Bible References:

- Acts 8:9-11
- Acts 9:20-22
- Galatians 1:6
- Mark 2:10-12
- Matthew 7:28
- Matthew 15:29-31
- Matthew 19:25

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0926, H2865, H3820, H4159, H6313, H6381, H6382, H6383, H6395, H8074, H8429, H8539, H8540, H8541, G06390, G15680, G15690, G16050, G16110, G18390, G22840, G22850, G22960, G22970, G22980, G40230, G45920, G50590

(Go back to: [Amos 9:14](#))

Amaziah

Facts:

Amaziah became king over the kingdom of Judah when his father, King Joash, was murdered.

- King Amaziah reigned over Judah for twenty-nine years, from 796 BC to 767 BC.
- He was a good king, but he did not destroy the high places where idols were worshiped.
- Amaziah eventually put to death all the men who were responsible for the murder of his father.
- He defeated the rebellious Edomites and brought them back under the control of the Kingdom of Judah.
- He challenged King Jehoash of Israel to a battle, but lost. Part of the walls of Jerusalem were broken down and the silver and gold vessels of the temple were stolen.
- Years later King Amaziah turned away from Yahweh and certain men in Jerusalem plotted together and killed him.

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

(See also: Joash, Edom)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 3:10-12
- 1 Chronicles 4:34
- 2 Chronicles 25:9-10
- 2 Kings 14:10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0558

(Go back to: [Amos 7:10](#); [7:12](#); [7:14](#))

Amorite

Facts:

The Amorites were a powerful group of people who inhabited the land of Canaan and lived on both sides of the Jordan River.

- Their name means “high one,” which may refer to the mountainous regions where they lived or to the fact that they were known to be very tall.
- The book of Genesis reports that the Amorites were descended from Canaan, the grandson of Noah.
- The city of Ai was inhabited by Amorites.
- God refers to the “sin of the Amorites,” which included their worship of false gods and the sinful practices associated.
- Joshua led the Israelites in destroying the Amorites, as God had commanded them to do.

Bible References:

- Amos 2:9
- Ezekiel 16:3
- Genesis 10:16
- Genesis 15:14-16
- Joshua 9:10

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **15:7** Sometime later, the kings of another people group in Canaan, the **Amorites**, heard that the Gibeonites had made a peace treaty with the Israelites, so they combined their armies into one large army and attacked Gibeon.
- **15:8** In the early morning they surprised the **Amorite** armies and attacked them.
- **15:9** God fought for Israel that day. He caused the **Amorites** to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the **Amorites**.
- **15:10** God also caused the sun to stay in one place in the sky so that Israel would have enough time to completely defeat the **Amorites**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0567

(Go back to: [Amos 2:9](#); [2:10](#))

Amos

Facts:

Amos was an Israelite prophet who lived during the time of King Uzziah of Judah.

- Before being called as a prophet, Amos was originally a shepherd and fig farmer living in the kingdom of Judah.
- Amos prophesied against the prosperous northern kingdom of Israel regarding their unjust treatment of people.

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

(See also: [fig](#), [Judah](#), kingdom of Israel, shepherd, Uzziah)

Bible References:

- Amos 1:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5986

(Go back to: [Amos 1:1](#); [7:8](#); [7:10](#); [7:11](#); [7:12](#); [7:14](#); [8:2](#))

ancestor, father, fathered, forefather, grandfather

Definition:

The term “father” refers to a person’s male parent.

- The terms “father” and “forefather” are often used to refer to a male ancestor(s) of a certain person or people group. This could also be translated a “ancestor” or “ancestral father.”
- The expression “the father of” can figuratively refer to a person who is the leader a group of related people or the source of something. For example, in Genesis 4 “the father of all who live in tents” could mean, “the first clan leader of the first people who ever lived in tents.”
- The apostle Paul figuratively called himself the “father” of those he had helped to become Christians through sharing the gospel with them.

Translation Suggestions

- When talking about a father and his literal son, this term should be translated using the usual term to refer to a father in the language.
- “God the Father” should also be translated using the usual, common word for “father.”
- When referring to forefathers, this term could be translated as “ancestors” or “ancestral fathers.”
- When Paul refers to himself figuratively as a father to believers in Christ, this could be translated as “spiritual father” or “father in Christ.”
- Sometimes the word “father” can be translated as “clan leader,” depending on the context.
- The phrase “father of all lies” could be translated as “source of all lies” or “the one from whom all lies come.”

(See also: God the Father, [son](#), Son of God)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:2
- Acts 7:32
- Acts 7:45
- Acts 22:3
- Genesis 31:30
- Genesis 31:42
- Genesis 31:53
- Hebrews 7:4-6
- John 4:12
- Joshua 24:3-4
- Malachi 3:7
- Mark 10:7-9
- Matthew 1:7
- Matthew 3:9
- Matthew 10:21
- Matthew 18:14
- Romans 4:12

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0001, H0002, H0025, H0369, H0539, H1121, H1730, H1733, H2524, H3205, H3490, H4940, H5971, H7223, G05400, G10800, G37370, G39620, G39640, G39660, G39670, G39700, G39710, G39950, G42450, G42690, G46130

(Go back to: [Amos 2:4; 2:7](#))

appoint, appointed

Definition:

The terms “appoint” and “appointed” refer to choosing someone to fulfill a specific task or role.

- To “be appointed” can also refer to being “chosen” to receive something, as in “appointed to eternal life.” That people were “appointed to eternal life” means they were chosen to receive eternal life.
- The phrase “appointed time” refers to God’s “chosen time” or “planned time” for something to happen.
- The word “appoint” may also mean to “command” or “assign” someone to do something.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “appoint” could include “choose” or “assign” or “formally choose” or “designate.”
- The term “appointed” could be translated as “assigned” or “planned” or “specifically chose.”
- The phrase “be appointed” could also be translated as “be chosen.”

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:11
- Acts 3:20
- Acts 6:2
- Acts 13:48
- Genesis 41:33-34
- Numbers 3:9-10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0561, H0977, H2163, H2296, H2706, H2708, H2710, H3198, H3245, H3259, H3677, H3983, H4150, H4151, H4152, H4483, H4487, H4662, H5324, H5344, H5414, H5567, H5975, H6310, H6485, H6565, H6635, H6680, H6923, H6942, H6966, H7760, H7896, G03220, G06060, G12990, G13030, G19350, G25250, G27490, G42870, G42960, G43840, G49290, G50210, G50870

(Go back to: [Amos 2:15](#); [3:14](#); [8:10](#); [9:4](#))

Arabah

Facts:

The Old Testament term "Arabah" often refers to a very large desert and plains region that includes the valley surrounding the Jordan River and extends south to the northern tip of the Red Sea.

- The Israelites traveled through this desert region on their journey from Egypt to the land of Canaan.
- The "Sea of the Arabah" could also be translated as "sea located in the Arabah desert region." This sea is often referred to as the "Salt Sea" or the "Dead Sea."
- The term "arabah" can also be a general reference to any desert region.

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

(See also: [desert](#), Sea of Reeds, Jordan River, Canaan, Salt Sea, [Egypt](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 23:24-25
- 2 Kings 25:4-5
- 2 Samuel 2:29
- Jeremiah 2:4-6
- Job 24:5-7
- Zechariah 14:10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1026, H6160

(Go back to: [Amos 6:14](#))

Ashdod, Azotus

Facts:

Ashdod was one of the five most important cities of the Philistines. It was located in southwestern Canaan near the Mediterranean Sea, halfway between the cities of Gaza and Joppa.

- The temple of the Philistine's false god Dagon was located in Ashdod.
- God severely punished the people of Ashdod when the Philistines stole the ark of the covenant and put it in the pagan temple at Ashdod.
- The Greek name for this city was Azotus. It was one of the cities where the evangelist Philip preached the gospel.

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

(See also: Ekron, Gath, Gaza, Joppa, Philip, [Philistines](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 5:1-3
- Acts 8:40
- Amos 1:8
- Joshua 15:45-47
- Zechariah 9:6

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0795, G01080

(Go back to: [Amos 1:8](#); [3:9](#))

Ashkelon

Facts:

In Bible times, Ashkelon was a major Philistine city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. It still exists in Israel today.

- Ashkelon was one of the five most important Philistine cities, along with Ashdod, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza.
- The Israelites did not completely conquer the people of Ashkelon, even though the kingdom of Judah occupied its hill country.
- Ashkelon remained occupied by the Philistines for hundreds of years.

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

(See also: [Ashdod](#), Canaan, Ekron, Gath, Gaza, [Philistines](#), Mediterranean)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 6:17-18
- Amos 1:8
- Jeremiah 25:19-21
- Joshua 13:2-3
- Judges 1:18-19
- Zechariah 9:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0831

(Go back to: [Amos 1:8](#))

assembly, assemble, congregation, meeting, gather, community

Definition:

The term "assembly" usually refers to a group of people who come together for some reason, often to discuss problems, give advice, or make decisions. An assembly can be a group that is organized in an official and somewhat permanent way, or it can be a group of people who come together temporarily for a specific purpose or occasion.

Old Testament

- In the Old Testament there was a special kind of assembly called a "sacred assembly" in which the people of Israel would gather to worship Yahweh.
- Sometimes the term "assembly" referred to the Israelites in general, as a group.

New Testament

- In the New Testament, an assembly of 70 Jewish leaders in major cities such as Jerusalem would meet to judge legal matters and to settle disputes between people. This assembly was known as the "Sanhedrin" or the "Council."

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, "assembly" could also be translated as "special gathering" or "congregation" or "council" or "army" or "large group."
- When the term "assembly" refers generally to the Israelites as a whole, it could also be translated as "community" or "people of Israel."
- The phrase, "all the assembly" could be translated as "all the people" or "the whole group of Israelites" or "everyone." (See: [hyperbole](#))
- A large gathering of enemy soldiers was sometimes also referred to as an "assembly." This could be translated as "army."

(See also: council)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:14
- Acts 7:38
- Ezra 10:12-13
- Hebrews 12:22-24
- Leviticus 4:20-21
- Nehemiah 8:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0622, H1481, H2199, H3259, H4150, H4186, H4744, H5475, H5712, H6116, H6908, H6950, H6951, H6952, G15770, G38310, G48630, G48640, G48710, G49050

(Go back to: [Amos 3:9](#))

Bashan

Facts:

Bashan was a region of land east of the Sea of Galilee. It covered an area that is now part of Syria and the Golan Heights.

- An Old Testament city of refuge called “Golan” was located in the region of Bashan.
- Bashan was a very fertile region known for its oak trees and pasturing animals.
- Genesis 14 records that Bashan was the site of a war between several kings and their nations.
- During Israel's wanderings in the desert after their escape from Egypt, they took possession of part of the region of Bashan.
- Years later, King Solomon obtained supplies from that region.

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

(See also: [Egypt](#), oak, Sea of Galilee, Syria)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 4:13
- Amos 4:1
- Jeremiah 22:20-21
- Joshua 9:10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1316

(Go back to: [Amos 4:1](#))

Beersheba

Facts:

In Old Testament times, Beersheba was a city located about 45 miles southwest of Jerusalem in a desert area that is now called the Negev.

- The desert surrounding Beersheba was the wilderness area where Hagar and Ishmael wandered after Abraham sent them away from his tents.
- The name of this city means “well of the oath.” It was given this name when Abraham swore an oath to not punish King Abimelech’s men for seizing control of one of Abraham’s wells.

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

(See also: Abimelech, Abraham, Hagar, Ishmael, [Jerusalem](#), [oath](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 3:20
- 2 Samuel 17:11
- Genesis 21:14
- Genesis 21:31
- Genesis 46:1
- Nehemiah 11:30

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0884

(Go back to: [Amos 5:5](#); [8:14](#))

Bethel

Facts:

Bethel was a city located just north of Jerusalem in the land of Canaan. It was formerly called "Luz."

- After receiving God's promises for the first time, Abram (Abraham) built an altar to God near Bethel. The actual name of the city was not yet Bethel at that time, but it was usually referred to as "Bethel," which was better known.
- When fleeing from his brother Esau, Jacob stayed overnight near this city and slept outdoors on the ground there. While he was sleeping, he had a dream showing angels going up and down a ladder to heaven.
- This city did not have the name "Bethel" until after Jacob named it that. To make this clear, some translations may translate it as "Luz (later called Bethel)" in the passages about Abraham, as well as when Jacob first arrives there (before he changed the name).
- Bethel is mentioned often in the Old Testament and was a place where many important events happened.

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

(See also: Abraham, [altar](#), [Jacob](#), [Jerusalem](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 12:8-9
- Genesis 35:1
- Hosea 10:15
- Judges 1:23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1008

(Go back to: [Amos 3:14](#); [4:4](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [7:10](#); [7:13](#))

bow, bow down, kneel, bend, bend the knee

Definition:

To bow means to bend over to humbly express respect and honor toward someone. To “bow down” means to bend over or kneel down very low, often with face and hands toward the ground.

- Other expressions include “bow the knee” (meaning to kneel) and “bow the head” (meaning to bend the head forward in humble respect or in sorrow).
- Bowing down can also be a sign of distress or mourning. Someone who is “bowed down” has been brought to a low position of humility.
- Often a person will bow in the presence of someone who is of higher status or greater importance, such as kings and other rulers.
- Bowing down before God is an expression of worship to him.
- In the Bible, people bowed down to Jesus when they realized from his miracles and teaching that he had come from God.
- The Bible says that when Jesus comes back someday, everyone will bow the knee to worship him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, this term could be translated with a word or phrase that means “bend forward” or “bend the head” or “kneel.”
- The term “bow down” could be translated as “kneel down” or “prostrate oneself.”
- Some languages will have more than one way of translating this term, depending on the context.

(See also: humble, worship)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 5:18
- Exodus 20:5
- Genesis 24:26
- Genesis 44:14
- Isaiah 44:19
- Luke 24:5
- Matthew 2:11
- Revelation 3:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0086, H3721, H3766, H5753, H5791, H6915, H7743, H7812, H7817, G11200, G25780, G28270, G40980

(Go back to: [Amos 3:14](#); [8:14](#))

bread

Definition:

Bread is a food made from flour mixed with water and oil to form a dough. The dough is then shaped into a loaf and baked.

- When the term “loaf” occurs by itself, it means “loaf of bread.”
- Bread dough is usually made with something that makes it rise, such as yeast. However, bread can also be made without yeast so that it does not rise. This is called “unleavened bread” in the Bible. The ancient Israelites ate “unleavened bread” during the passover meal.
- Since bread was the main food for many people in biblical times, this term is also used in the Bible to refer to food in general. (See: [Synecdoche](#)) Many times the term “bread” can be translated more generally as “food.”
- The phrase “bread of the presence” refers to twelve loaves of bread that were placed on a golden table in the tabernacle or temple building as a sacrifice to God. These loaves represented the twelve tribes of Israel and were only for the priests to eat. This could be translated as “bread showing that God lived among them.”
- The term “bread from heaven” refers to the special white food called “manna” that God provided for the Israelites when they were wandering through the desert. Jesus also called himself the “bread that came down from heaven” and the “bread of life.”

(See also: Passover, tabernacle, [temple](#), unleavened bread, yeast)

Bible References:

- Acts 2:46
- Acts 27:35
- Exodus 16:15
- Luke 9:13
- Mark 6:38
- Matthew 4:4
- Matthew 11:18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2557, H3899, H4635, H4682, G01060, G07400, G42860

(Go back to: [Amos 4:6](#); [7:12](#))

brother

Definition:

The term “brother” refers to a male sibling who shares at least one biological parent.

- In the Old Testament, the term “brothers” is also used as a general reference to relatives or associates, such as members of the same tribe, clan, occupation, or people group. When used in this way, the term can refer to both men and women.
- In the New Testament, the apostles often use the term “brothers” to refer to fellow Christians, including both men and women.
- A few times in the New Testament, the apostles used the term “sister” when referring specifically to a fellow Christian who was a woman, or to emphasize that both men and women are being included. For example, James emphasizes that he is talking about all believers when he refers to “a brother or sister who is in need of food or clothing.”

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term with the literal word that is used in the target language to refer to a natural or biological brother, unless this would give wrong meaning.
- In the Old Testament especially, when “brothers” is used very generally to refer to members of the same family, clan, or people group, possible translations could include “relatives” or “clan members” or “fellow Israelites.”
- In the context of referring to a fellow believer in Christ, this term could be translated as “brother in Christ” or “spiritual brother.”
- If both males and females are being referred to and “brother” would give a wrong meaning, then a more general kinship term could be used that would include both males and females.
- Other ways to translate this term so that it refers to both male and female believers could be “fellow believers” or “Christian brothers and sisters.”
- Make sure to check the context to determine whether only men are being referred to, or whether both men and women are included.

(See also: [apostle](#), [God the Father](#), [sister](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 7:26
- Genesis 29:10
- Leviticus 19:17
- Nehemiah 3:1
- Philippians 4:21
- Revelation 1:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0251, H0252, H0264, H1730, H2992, H2993, H2994, H7453, G00800, G00810, G23850, G24550, G25000, G46130, G53600, G55690

(Go back to: [Amos 1:9](#); [1:11](#))

burnt offering, offering by fire

Definition:

A “burnt offering” was a type of sacrifice to God that was burnt up by fire on an altar. It was offered to make atonement for the sins of the people. This was also called an “offering by fire.”

- Animals used for this offering were usually sheep or goats, but oxen and birds were also used.
- Except for the skin, the entire animal was burned up in this offering. The skin or hide was given to the priest.
- God commanded the Jewish people to offer burnt offerings two times every day.

(See also: [altar](#), atonement, ox, [priest](#), [sacrifice](#))

Bible References:

- Exodus 40:5-7
- Genesis 8:20
- Genesis 22:1-3
- Leviticus 3:5
- Mark 12:33

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0801, H5930, H7133, H8548, G36460

(Go back to: [Amos 5:22](#))

call, call out

Definition:

The terms “call” and “call out” usually mean to speak loudly, but the term “call” can also mean to name or summon a person. There are also some other meanings.

- To “call out” to someone means to shout, to announce, or to proclaim. It can also mean to ask someone for help, especially God.
- Often in the Bible, “call” has a meaning of “summon” or “command to come” or “request to come.”
- God calls people to come to him and be his people. This is their “calling.”
- When God “calls” people, it means that God has appointed or chosen people to be his children, to be his servants and proclaimers of his message of salvation through Jesus.
- This term is also used in the context of naming someone. For example, “His name is called John,” means “He is named John” or “His name is John.”
- To be “called by the name of” means that someone is given the name of someone else. God says that he has called his people by his name.
- A different expression, “I have called you by name” means that God has specifically chosen that person.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “call” could be translated by a word that means “summon,” which includes the idea of being intentional or purposeful in calling.
- The expression “call out to you” could be translated as “ask you for help” or “pray to you urgently.”
- When the Bible says that God has “called” us to be his servants, this could be translated as “specially chose us” or “appointed us” to be his servants.
- “You must call his name” can also be translated as “you must name him.”
- “His name is called” could also be translated as “his name is” or “he is named.”
- To “call out” could be translated as “say loudly” or “shout” or “say with a loud voice.” Make sure the translation of this does not sound like the person is angry.
- The expression “your calling” could be translated as “your purpose” or “God’s purpose for you” or “God’s special work for you.”
- To “call on the name of the Lord” could be translated as “seek the Lord and depend on him” or “trust in the Lord and obey him.”
- To “call for” something could be translated by “demand” or “ask for” or “command.”
- The expression “you are called by my name” could be translated as “I have given you my name, showing that you belong to me.”
- When God says, “I have called you by name,” this could be translated as “I know you and have chosen you.”

(See also: [pray](#), cry)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:24
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 1:9
- Ephesians 4:1
- Galatians 1:15
- Matthew 2:15
- Philippians 3:14

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H2199, H4744, H6817, H7121, H7123, H7769, H7773, G01540, G03630, G14580, G15280, G19410, G19510, G20280, G20460, G25640, G28210, G28220, G28400, G29190, G30040, G31060, G33330, G33430, G36030, G36860, G36870, G43160, G43410, G43770, G47790, G48670, G54550, G55370, G55810

(Go back to: [Amos 7:4](#); [9:12](#))

captive, captivate, captivity, catch

Definition:

The terms “captive” and “captivity” refer to people who have been captured and forced to live somewhere they do not want to live, such as in a foreign country.

- The Israelites from the kingdom of Judah were held captive in the kingdom of Babylonia for 70 years.
- Captives are often required to work for the people or nation that captured them.
- Daniel and Nehemiah were Israelite captives who worked for the Babylonian king.
- The expression to “take captive” is another way of talking about capturing someone.
- The expression, “carry you away captive” could also be translated as “force you to live as captives” or “take you away to another country as prisoners.”
- In a figurative sense, the apostle Paul tells Christians to “take captive” every thought and make it obedient to Christ.
- He also talks about how a person can be “taken captive” by sin, which means he is “controlled by” sin.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, to be “held captive” could also be translated by, “not allowed to be free” or “kept in prison” or “forced to live in a foreign country.”
- The expression, “led captive” or “taken captive” could be translated as “captured” or “imprisoned” or “forced to go to a foreign land.”
- The term “captives” could also be translated as “people who were captured” or “enslaved people.”
- Depending on the context, “captivity” could also be translated as “imprisonment” or “exile” or “forced stay in a foreign country.”

(See also: Babylon, [exile](#), prison, seize)

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 10:5
- Isaiah 20:4
- Jeremiah 43:3
- Luke 4:18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1546, H1547, H7617, H7622, H7628, H7633, H7686, G01610, G01620, G01630, G01640, G22210

(Go back to: [Amos 9:4](#); [9:14](#))

cedar, cedarwood

Definition:

The term "cedar" refers to a large fir tree which normally has reddish-brown wood. Like other firs, it has cones and needle-like leaves.

- The Old Testament often mentions cedar trees in connection with Lebanon, where they grew plentifully.
- Cedar wood was used in the construction of the Jerusalem temple.
- It was also used for sacrifices and purification offerings.

(See also: fir, pure, [sacrifice](#), [temple](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 14:1-2
- 1 Kings 7:1-2
- Isaiah 2:13
- Zechariah 11:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0730

(Go back to: [Amos 2:9](#))

children, child, offspring

Definition:

The term “child” (plural “children”) refers to the offspring of a man and woman. The term is often used more generally to refer to anyone who is young in age and is not yet a fully grown adult. The term “offspring” is a general reference to the biological descendants of people or animals.

- In the Bible, disciples or followers are sometimes called “children.”
- Often the term “children” is used to refer to a person’s descendants.
- Often in the Bible, “offspring” has the same meaning as “children” or “descendants.”
- The term “seed” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to offspring.
- The phrase “children of” can refer to being characterized by something. Some examples of this would be:
 - children of the light
 - children of obedience
 - children of the devil
- This term can also refer to the Church. For example, sometimes the New Testament refers to people who believe in Jesus as “children of God.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “children” could be translated as “descendants” when it is referring to a person’s great-grandchildren or great-great-grandchildren, etc.
- Depending on the context, “children of” could be translated as “people who have the characteristics of” or “people who behave like.”
- If possible, the phrase, “children of God” should be translated literally since an important biblical theme is that God is our heavenly Father. A possible translation alternate would be, “people who belong to God” or “God’s spiritual children.”
- When Jesus calls his disciples “children,” this could also be translated as “dear friends” or “my beloved disciples.”
- When Paul and John refer to believers in Jesus as “children,” this could also be translated as “dear fellow believers.”
- The phrase, “children of the promise” could be translated as “people who have received what God promised them.”

(See also: descendant, seed, promise, [son](#), [spirit](#), believe, beloved)

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:28
- 3 John 1:4
- Galatians 4:19
- Genesis 45:11
- Joshua 8:34-35
- Nehemiah 5:5
- Acts 17:29
- Exodus 13:11-13
- Genesis 24:7
- Isaiah 41:8-9
- Job 5:25
- Luke 3:7
- Matthew 12:34

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1069, H1121, H1123, H1129, H1323, H1397, H1580, H2029, H2030, H2056, H2138, H2145, H2233, H2945, H3173, H3205, H3206, H3208, H3211, H3243, H3490, H4392, H5209, H5271, H5288, H5290, H5759, H5764, H5768, H5953, H6185, H6363, H6529, H6631, H7908, H7909, H7921, G07300, G08150, G10250, G10640, G10810, G10850, G14710, G34390, G35150, G35160, G38080, G38120, G38130, G38160, G50400, G50410, G50420, G50430, G50440, G52060, G52070, G53880

(Go back to: [Amos 9:13](#))

comfort, comforts, comforter, uncomforted

Definition:

The terms “comfort” and “comforter” refer to helping someone who is suffering physical or emotional pain.

- A person who comforts someone is called a “comforter.”
- In the Old Testament, the term “comfort” is used to describe how God is kind and loving to his people and helps them when they are suffering.
- In the New Testament, it says that God will comfort his people through the Holy Spirit. Those who receive the comfort are then enabled to give the same comfort to others who are suffering.
- The expression “comforter of Israel” referred to the Messiah who would come to rescue his people.
- Jesus referred to the Holy Spirit as the “Comforter” who helps believers in Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “comfort” could also be translated as “ease the pain of” or “help (someone) overcome grief” or “encourage” or “console.”
- A phrase such as “our comfort” could be translated as “our encouragement” or “our consoling of (someone)” or “our help in times of grieving.”
- The term “comforter” could be translated as “person who comforts” or “someone who helps ease pain” or “person who encourages.”
- When the Holy Spirit is called “the Comforter” this could also be translated as “the Encourager” or “the Helper” or “the One who helps and guides.”
- The phrase “comforter of Israel” could be translated as “the Messiah, who comforts Israel.”
- An expression like, “they have no comforter” could also be translated as “No one has comforted them” or “There is no one to encourage or help them.”

(See also: encourage, Holy Spirit)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:8-11
- 2 Corinthians 1:4
- 2 Samuel 10:1-3
- Acts 20:11-12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2505, H5150, H5162, H5165, H5564, H8575, G03020, G38700, G38740, G38750, G38880, G38900, G39310

(Go back to: [Amos 7:3](#); [7:6](#))

command, commandment

Definition:

The term "command" means to order someone to do something. The term "commandment" refers to the thing that a person is commanded to do.

- The term "commandment" sometimes refers to certain commands of God which are more formal and permanent, such as the "Ten Commandments."
- A command can be positive ("Honor your parents") or negative ("Do not steal").
- To "take command" means to "take control" or "take charge" of something or someone.

Translation Suggestions

- It is best to translate this term differently from the term, "law." Also compare with the definitions of "decree" and "statute."
- Some translators may prefer to translate "command" and "commandment" with the same word in their language.
- Others may prefer to use a special word for commandment that refers to lasting, formal commands that God has made.

(See decree, [statute](#), law, Ten Commandments)

Bible References:

- Luke 1:6
- Matthew 1:24
- Matthew 22:38
- Matthew 28:20
- Numbers 1:17-19
- Romans 7:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0559, H0560, H0565, H1296, H1696, H1697, H1881, H2706, H2708, H2710, H2941, H2942, H2951, H3027, H3982, H3983, H4406, H4662, H4687, H4929, H4931, H4941, H5057, H5713, H5749, H6213, H6310, H6346, H6490, H6673, H6680, H7101, H7218, H7227, H7262, H7761, H7970, H8269, G12630, G12910, G12960, G12970, G12990, G16900, G17780, G17810, G17850, G20030, G20040, G20080, G20360, G27530, G30560, G37260, G38520, G38530, G43670, G44830, G44870, G55060

(Go back to: [Amos 2:12](#); [3:2](#); [3:14](#); [6:11](#); [9:3](#); [9:4](#); [9:9](#))

confess, confession

Definition:

To confess means to admit or assert that something is true. A "confession" is a statement or admission that something is true.

- The term "confess" can refer to boldly stating the truth about God. It can also refer to admitting that we have sinned.
- The Bible says that if people confess their sins to God, he will forgive them.
- James the apostle wrote in his letter that when believers confess their sins to each other, this brings spiritual healing.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians that someday everyone will confess or declare that Jesus is Lord.
- Paul also said that if people confess that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead, they will be saved.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate "confess" could include, "admit" or "testify" or "declare" or "acknowledge" or "affirm."
- Different ways to translate "confession" could be, "declaration" or "testimony" or "statement about what we believe" or "admitting sin."

(See also: faith, [testimony](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:8-10
- 2 John 1:7-8
- James 5:16
- Leviticus 5:5-6
- Matthew 3:4-6
- Nehemiah 1:6-7
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Psalms 38:17-18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3034, H8426, G18430, G36700, G36710

(Go back to: [Amos 4:5](#))

consume, devour

Definition:

The term “consume” literally means to use up something. It has several figurative meanings.

- In the Bible, the word “consume” often refers to destroying things or people.
- A fire is said to consume things, which means it destroys them by burning them up.
- God is described as a “consuming fire,” which is a description of his anger against sin. His anger results in terrible punishment for sinners who do not repent.
- To consume food means to eat or drink something.
- The phrase, “consume the land” could be translated as “destroy the land.”

Translation Suggestions

- In the context of consuming the land or people, this term could be translated as “destroy.”
- When fire is referred to, “consume” could be translated as “burn up.”
- The burning bush that Moses saw “was not consumed” which could be translated as “did not get burned up” or “did not burn up.”
- When referring to eating, “consume” could be translated as “eat” or “devour.”
- If someone’s strength is “consumed,” it means his strength is “used up” or “gone.”
- The expression, “God is a consuming fire” could be translated as “God is like a fire that burns things up” or “God is angry against sin and will destroy sinners like a fire.”

(See also: [devour](#), wrath)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 18:38-40
- Deuteronomy 7:16
- Jeremiah 3:23-25
- Job 7:9
- Numbers 11:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0398, H0402, H1086, H1104, H1197, H2628, H3615, H3617, H3857, H4529, H5595, H8046, H8552, G03550, G26180, G26540, G27190, G53150

(Go back to: [Amos 7:2](#))

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 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: [Amos 1:9](#))

cut off, cut down

Definition:

The expression “be cut off” is an expression that means to be excluded, banished or isolated from the main group. It can also refer to being killed as an act of divine judgment for sin.

- In the Old Testament, disobeying God’s commands resulted in being cut off, or separated, from God’s people and from his presence.
- God also said he would “cut off” or destroy the non-Israelite nations, because they did not worship or obey him and were enemies of Israel.
- The expression “cut off” is also used to refer to God causing a river to stop flowing.

Translation Suggestions:

- The expression “be cut off” could be translated as “be banished” or “be sent away” or “be separated from” or “be killed” or “be destroyed.”
- Depending on the context, to “cut off” could be translated as to “destroy” or to “send away” or to “separate from” or to “destroy.”
- In the context of flowing waters being cut off, this could be translated as “were stopped” or “were caused to stop flowing” or “were divided.”
- The literal meaning of cutting something with a knife should be distinguished from the figurative uses of this term.

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:14
- Judges 21:6
- Proverbs 23:18

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1214, H1219, H1438, H1494, H1504, H1629, H1820, H2686, H3582, H3772, H5243, H5352, H6789, H7088, H7096, H7112, H7113, G06090, G08510, G15810

(Go back to: [Amos 1:5](#); [1:8](#); [2:3](#))

darkness

Definition:

The term "darkness" literally means an absence of light. There are also several figurative meanings of this term:

- As a metaphor, "darkness" means "impurity" or "evil" or "spiritual blindness."
- It also refers to anything related to sin and moral corruption.
- The expression "dominion of darkness" refers to all that is evil and ruled by Satan.
- The term "darkness" can also be used as a metaphor for death. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- People who do not know God are said to be "living in darkness," which means they do not understand or practice righteousness.
- God is light (righteousness) and the darkness (evil) cannot overcome that light.
- The place of punishment for those who reject God is sometimes referred to as "outer darkness."

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate this term literally, with a word in the project language that refers to the absence of light. This could also be a term that refers to the darkness of a room with no light or to the time of day when there is no light.
- For the figurative uses, it is also important to keep the image of darkness in contrast to light, as a way to describe evil and deception in contrast to goodness and truth.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could be, "darkness of night" (as opposed to "light of day") or "not seeing anything, like at night" or "evil, like a dark place".

(See also: corrupt, dominion, [kingdom](#), light, redeem, [righteous](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:6
- 1 John 2:8
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5
- 2 Samuel 22:12
- Colossians 1:13
- Isaiah 5:30
- Jeremiah 13:16
- Joshua 24:7
- Matthew 8:12

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0652, H0653, H2816, H2821, H2822, H2825, H3990, H3991, H4285, H5890, H6205, G22170, G46520, G46530, G46550, G46560

(Go back to: [Amos 5:18](#); [5:20](#))

David

Facts:

David was the second king of Israel and he loved and served God. He was the main writer of the book of Psalms.

- When David was still a young boy caring for his family's sheep, God chose him to become the next king of Israel.
- David became a great fighter and led the Israelite army in battles against their enemies. His defeat of Goliath the Philistine is well known.
- King Saul tried to kill David, but God protected him, and made him king after Saul's death.
- David committed a terrible sin, but he repented and God forgave him.
- Jesus, the Messiah, is called the "Son of David" because he is a descendant of King David.

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

(See also: Goliath, [Philistines](#), Saul (OT))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 17:12-13
- 1 Samuel 20:34
- 2 Samuel 5:2
- 2 Timothy 2:8
- Acts 2:25
- Acts 13:22
- Luke 1:32
- Mark 2:26

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:2** God chose a young Israelite named **David** to be king after Saul. **David** was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. ... **David** was a humble and righteous man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **17:3** **David** was also a great soldier and leader. When **David** was still a young man, he fought against a giant named Goliath.
- **17:4** Saul became jealous of the people's love for **David**. Saul tried many times to kill him, so **David** hid from Saul.
- **17:5** God blessed **David** and made him successful. **David** fought many battles and God helped him defeat Israel's enemies.
- **17:6** **David** wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- **17:9** **David** ruled with justice and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- **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. **David** repented of his sin and God forgave him. For the rest of his life, **David** followed and obeyed God, even in difficult times.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1732, G11380

(Go back to: [Amos 9:11](#))

declare, proclaim, announce

Definition:

The terms “declare” and “declaration” refer to making a formal or public statement, often to emphasize something. Other terms with similar meaning include “proclaim,” “proclamation,” “announce,” and “announcement.”

- A “declaration” not only emphasizes the importance of what is being proclaimed, but it also calls attention to the one making the declaration.
- For example, in the Old Testament, a message from God is often preceded by “the declaration of Yahweh” or “this is what Yahweh declares.” This expression emphasizes that it is Yahweh himself who is saying this. The fact that the message comes from Yahweh shows how important that message is.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “declare” could also be translated as “proclaim” or “publicly state” or “strongly say” or “emphatically state.”
- The term “declaration” could also be translated as “statement” or “proclamation.”
- The phrase “this is Yahweh’s declaration” could be translated as “this is what Yahweh declares” or “this is what Yahweh says.”

(See also: preach, decree)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 16:24
- 1 Corinthians 15:31-32
- 1 Samuel 24:17-18
- Amos 2:16
- Ezekiel 5:11-12
- Matthew 7:21-23

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0262, H0559, H0816, H0874, H1696, H3045, H4853, H5002, H5042, H5046, H5608, H6567, H7121, H7561, H7878, H8085, G03120, G05180, G06690, G12290, G13440, G15550, G17180, G18340, G20970, G25110, G26050, G26070, G31400, G36700, G37240, G38220, G38700, G39550, G42960

(Go back to: [Amos 4:5](#); [5:16](#))

desert, wilderness

Definition:

A desert, or wilderness, is a dry, barren place where very few plants and trees can grow.

- A desert is a land area with a dry climate and few plants or animals.
- Because of the harsh conditions, very few people can live in the desert, so it is also referred to as "wilderness."
- "Wilderness" conveys the meaning of being remote, desolate and isolated from people.
- This word can also be translated as "deserted place" or "remote place" or "uninhabited place."

Bible References:

- Acts 13:16-18
- Acts 21:38
- Exodus 4:27-28
- Genesis 37:21-22
- John 3:14
- Luke 1:80
- Luke 9:12-14
- Mark 1:3
- Matthew 4:1
- Matthew 11:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0776, H2723, H3293, H3452, H4057, H6160, H6723, H6728, H6921, H8047, H8414, G20470, G20480

(Go back to: [Amos 2:10](#); [5:25](#))

destroy, destruction, annihilate

Definition:

The term “destroy” means to completely make an end to something, so that it no longer exists.

- The term “destroyer” means “a person who destroys.”
- This term is often used in the Old Testament as a general reference to anyone who destroys other people, such as an invading army.
- When God sent the angel to kill all the firstborn males in Egypt, that angel was referred to as “the destroyer of the firstborn.” This could be translated as “the one (or angel) who killed the firstborn males.”
- In the book of Revelation about the end times, Satan or some other evil spirit is called “the Destroyer.” He is the “one who destroys” because his purpose is to destroy and ruin everything God created.

(See also: angel, [Egypt](#), firstborn, Passover)

Bible References:

- Exodus 12:23
- Hebrews 11:28
- Jeremiah 6:26
- Judges 16:24

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0006, H0007, H0622, H0398, H1104, H1197, H1820, H1826, H1942, H2000, H2015, H2026, H2040, H2254, H2255, H2717, H2718, H2763, H2764, H3238, H3341, H3381, H3423, H3582, H3615, H3617, H3772, H3807, H4191, H4229, H4591, H4658, H4889, H5218, H5221, H5307, H5362, H5420, H5422, H5428, H5595, H5642, H6365, H6789, H6979, H7665, H7667, H7703, H7722, H7760, H7843, H7921, H8045, H8074, H8077, H8316, H8552, G03550, G03960, G06220, G08530, G13110, G18420, G20490, G25060, G25070, G26470, G26730, G27040, G30890, G36450, G41990, G53510, G53560

(Go back to: [Amos 1:8](#); [2:14](#); [3:15](#))

devour

Definition:

The term "devour" means to eat or consume in an aggressive manner.

- Using this word in a figurative sense, Paul warned believers to not devour one another, meaning to not attack or destroy each other with words or actions (Galatians 5:15).
- Also in a figurative sense, the term "devour" is often used with a meaning of "completely destroy" as when talking about nations devouring each other or a fire devouring buildings and people.
- This term could also be translated as "completely consume" or "totally destroy."

(See also: [consume](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Peter 5:8
- Amos 1:10
- Exodus 24:17
- Ezekiel 16:20
- Luke 15:30
- Matthew 23:13-15
- Psalms 21:9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0398, H0399, H0400, H0402, H1104, H1105, H3216, H3615, H3857, H3898, H7462, H7602, G20680, G26660, G27190, G53150

(Go back to: [Amos 1:4](#); [1:7](#); [1:10](#); [1:12](#); [1:14](#); [2:2](#); [2:5](#); [4:9](#); [5:6](#); [6:4](#); [7:4](#); [7:12](#); [9:14](#))

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: [Amos 2:2](#); [2:3](#); [4:10](#); [6:9](#); [9:1](#))

earth, land

Definition:

The term "earth" refers to the world on which human beings and other living things live. In the Bible, this term is sometimes translated as "land" when used in a general way to refer to the ground or the soil, or when used in a specific way to refer to a particular geographical area, usually a country or nation.

- In the Bible, the term "earth" is often paired with the term "heaven" as a way of indicating the abode of humankind on the earth in contrast with the abode of God in heaven.
- This term is usually translated "land" when paired with the name of people group to denote the territory belonging to those people, such as "the land of Canaan."
- The term "earthly" is sometimes used to refer to things that are physical and/or visible in contrast to things that are non-physical and/or invisible.
- This term can be used figuratively to refer to the people who live on the earth or what the earth contains, such as in "let the earth be glad" and "he will judge the earth."

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated by the word or phrase that the local language or nearby national languages use to refer to the planet earth on which we live.
- Depending on the context, "earth" could also be translated as "world" or "land" or "dirt" or "soil."
- When used figuratively, "earth" could be translated as "people on the earth" or "people living on earth" or "everything on earth."
- Ways to translate "earthly" could include "physical" or "things of this earth" or "visible."

(See also: world, [heaven](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 1:38-40
- 2 Chronicles 2:11-12
- Daniel 4:35
- Luke 12:51
- Matthew 6:10
- Matthew 11:25
- Zechariah 6:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0127, H0772, H0776, H0778, H2789, H3007, H3335, H6083, H7494, G10930, G19190, G27090, G28860, G36250, G45780, G55170

(Go back to: [Amos 2:7](#); [2:10](#); [3:5](#); [3:11](#); [4:13](#); [5:8](#); [7:2](#); [7:10](#); [7:12](#); [8:4](#); [8:8](#); [9:6](#); [9:9](#))

Egypt, Egyptian

Facts:

Egypt is a country in the northeast part of Africa, to the southwest of the land of Canaan. An Egyptian is a person who is from the country of Egypt.

- In ancient times, Egypt was a powerful and wealthy country.
- Ancient Egypt was divided into two parts, Lower Egypt (northern part where the Nile River flowed downward into the sea) and Upper Egypt (southern part). In the Old Testament, these parts are referred to as “Egypt” and “Pathros” in the original language text.
- Several times when there was little food in Canaan, Israel’s patriarchs traveled to Egypt to buy food for their families.
- For several hundred years, the Israelites were slaves in Egypt.
- Joseph and Mary went down to Egypt with the young child Jesus, to escape from Herod the Great.

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

(See also: Herod the Great, Joseph (NT), Nile River, patriarchs)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 4:7-9
- Acts 7:10
- Exodus 3:7
- Genesis 41:29
- Genesis 41:57
- Matthew 2:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:4** The slave traders took Joseph to **Egypt**. **Egypt** was a large, powerful country located along the Nile River.
- **8:8** Pharaoh was so impressed with Joseph that he appointed him to be the second most powerful man in all of **Egypt**!
- **8:11** So Jacob sent his older sons to *_Egypt_* to buy food.
- **8:14** Even though Jacob was an old man, he moved to **Egypt** with all of his family, and they all lived there.
- **9:1** After Joseph died, all of his relatives stayed in **Egypt**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4713, H4714, G01240, G01250

(Go back to: [Amos 2:10](#); [3:1](#); [3:9](#); [4:10](#); [8:8](#); [9:5](#); [9:7](#))

evil, wicked, unpleasant

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “evil” can refer either to the concept of moral wickedness or emotional unpleasantness. The context will usually make it clear which meaning is intended in the specific instance of the term.

- While “evil” may describe a person’s character, “wicked” may refer more to a person’s behavior. However, both terms are very similar in meaning.
- The term “wickedness” refers to the state of being that exists when people do wicked things.
- The results of evil are clearly shown in how people mistreat others by killing, stealing, slandering and being cruel and unkind.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the terms “evil” and “wicked” can be translated as “bad” or “sinful” or “immoral.”
- Other ways to translate these could include “not good” or “not righteous” or “not moral.”
- Make sure the words or phrases that are used to translate these terms fit the context that is natural in the target language.

(See also: disobey, [sin](#), [good](#), [righteous](#), demon)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 24:11
- 1 Timothy 6:10
- 3 John 1:10
- Genesis 2:17
- Genesis 6:5-6
- Job 1:1
- Job 8:20
- Judges 9:57
- Luke 6:22-23
- Matthew 7:11-12
- Proverbs 3:7
- Psalms 22:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **2:4** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand good and **evil** like he does.”
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were living in the world. They had become very **wicked** and violent.
- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a righteous man living among **wicked** people.
- **4:2** God saw that if they all kept working together to do **evil**, they could do many more sinful things.
- **8:12** “You tried to do **evil** when you sold me as a slave, but God used the **evil** for good!”
- **14:2** They (Canaanites) worshiped false gods and did many **evil** things.
- **17:1** But then he (Saul) became a **wicked** man who did not obey God, so God chose a different man who would one day be king in his place.
- **18:11** In the new kingdom of Israel, all the kings were **evil**.
- **29:8** The king was so angry that he threw the **wicked** servant into prison until he could pay back all of his debt.
- **45:2** They said, “We heard him (Stephen) speak **evil** things about Moses and God!”

- **50:17** He (Jesus) will wipe away every tear and there will be no more suffering, sadness, crying, **evil**, pain, or death.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0605, H1100, H1681, H1942, H2154, H2162, H2254, H2617, H3399, H3415, H4209, H4849, H5753, H5766, H5767, H5999, H6001, H6090, H7451, H7455, H7489, H7561, H7562, H7563, H7564, G00920, G01130, G04590, G09320, G09870, G09880, G14260, G25490, G25510, G25540, G25550, G25560, G25570, G25590, G25600, G26350, G26360, G41510, G41890, G41900, G41910, G53370

(Go back to: [Introduction to Amos](#); [Amos 3:6](#); [5:13](#); [5:14](#); [5:15](#); [6:3](#); [9:10](#))

ewe, ram, sheep, sheepfold, sheepshearers, sheepskins

Definition:

A “sheep” is a medium-sized animal with four legs that has wool all over its body. A male sheep is called a “ram.” A female sheep is called a “ewe.” The plural of “sheep” is also “sheep.”

- A baby sheep is called a “lamb.”
- The Israelites often used sheep for sacrifices, especially male sheep and young sheep.
- People eat meat from sheep and use their wool to make clothing and other things.
- Sheep are very trusting, weak, and timid. They are easily influenced to wander away. They need a shepherd to lead them, protect them, and provide them with food, water, and shelter.
- In the Bible, people are compared to sheep who have God as their shepherd.

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

(See also: [Israel](#), [lamb](#), [sacrifice](#), [shepherd](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 8:32
- Genesis 30:32
- John 2:14
- Luke 15:5
- Mark 6:34
- Matthew 9:36
- Matthew 10:6
- Matthew 12:12
- Matthew 25:33

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:12** One day while Moses was taking care of his **sheep**, he saw a bush that was on fire.
- **17:2** David was a shepherd from the town of Bethlehem. At different times while he was watching his father’s **sheep**, David had killed both a lion and a bear that had attacked the **sheep**.
- **30:3** To Jesus, these people were like **sheep** without a shepherd.
- **38:8** Jesus said, “All of you will all abandon me tonight. It is written, ‘I will strike the shepherd and all the **sheep** will be scattered.’”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0352, H1494, H1798, H2169, H3104, H3532, H3535, H3733, H3775, H5739, H5763, H6260, H6629, H6792, H7353, H7462, H7716, G41650, G42620, G42630

(Go back to: [Amos 7:15](#))

exile, exiled

Definition:

The term "exile" refers to people being forced to live somewhere away from their home country.

- People are usually sent into exile for punishment or for political reasons.
- A conquered people may be taken into exile to the country of the conquering army, in order to work for them.
- The "Babylonian exile" (or "the exile") is a period in Bible history when many Jewish citizens of the region of Judah were taken from their homes and forced to live in Babylon. It lasted 70 years.
- The phrase "the exiles" refers to people who are living in exile, away from their home country.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term to "exile" could also be translated as to "send away" or to "force out" or to "banish."
- The term "the exile" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "the sent away time" or "the time of banishment" or "the time of forced absence" or "banishment."
- Ways to translate "the exiles" could include "the exiled people" or "the people who were banished" or "the people exiled to Babylon."

(See also: Babylon, Judah)

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 24:14
- Daniel 2:25-26
- Ezekiel 1:1-3
- Isaiah 20:4
- Jeremiah 29:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1123, H1473, H1540, H1541, H1546, H1547, H3212, H3318, H5080, H6808, H7617, H7622, H8689, G39270

(Go back to: [Amos 1:6](#); [3:7](#); [5:5](#); [6:7](#); [7:11](#); [7:17](#))

face, facial

Definition:

The word “face” literally refers to the front part of a person’s head. This term also has several figurative meanings in the Bible.

- In the Bible, the term “face” is often used figuratively to mean a person’s presence, the front of an object, or the surface of something.
- When referring to a person, the term “face” is often used figuratively to mean the action of seeing, which can represent that person’s knowledge, perception, notice, attention, or judgment.
- In a physical sense, to “face” someone or something means to look in the direction of that person or thing.
- To “face each other” means to “look directly at each other.”
- Being “face to face” means that two people are seeing each other in person, at a close distance.
- When Jesus “steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,” it means that he very firmly decided to go.
- To “set one’s face against” people or a city means to firmly decide to no longer support, or to reject that city or person.
- The expression “face of the land” refers to the surface of the earth and often is a general reference to the whole earth. For example, a “famine covering the face of the earth” refers to a widespread famine affecting many people living on earth.
- The figurative expression “do not hide your face from your people” means “do not reject your people” or “do not desert your people” or “do not stop taking care of your people.”

Translation Suggestions:

- If possible, it is best to keep the expression or use an expression in the project language that has a similar meaning.
- The term to “face” could be translated as to “turn toward” or to “look at directly” or to “look at the face of.”
- The expression “face to face” could be translated as “up close” or “right in front of” or “in the presence of.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “before his face” could be translated as “ahead of him” or “in front of him” or “before him” or “in his presence.”
- The expression “set his face toward” could be translated as “began traveling toward” or “firmly made up his mind to go to.”
- The expression “hide his face from” could be translated as “turn away from” or “stop helping or protecting” or “reject.”
- To “set his face against” a city or people could be translated as “look at with anger and condemn” or “refuse to accept” or “decide to reject” or “condemn and reject” or “pass judgment on.”
- The expression “say it to their face” could be translated as “say it to them directly” or “say it to them in their presence” or “say it to them in person.”
- The expression “on the face of the land” could also be translated as “throughout the land” or “over the whole land” or “living throughout the land.”

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 5:4
- Genesis 33:10

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0600, H0639, H5869, H6440, H8389, G37990, G43830, G47500

(Go back to: [Amos 5:8](#); [9:6](#); [9:8](#))

family, household

Definition:

The term “family” refers to a group of people who are related by blood and usually includes a father, mother, and their children. In the Bible, this term sometimes includes other close relatives such as grandparents, grandchildren, uncles and aunts.

- In biblical times, usually the oldest man was the major authority of a family.
- Family could also include servants, concubines, and even foreigners.
- Some languages may have a broader word such as “clan” or “household” that would fit better in contexts where more than just parents and children are being referred to.
- The New Testament often uses terms related to the concept of “family” to refer to the Church, meaning people who believe in Jesus.

(See also: clan, [ancestor](#), [house](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:1-2
- 1 Samuel 18:18
- Exodus 1:21
- Joshua 2:12-13
- Luke 2:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0001, H0251, H0272, H0504, H1004, H1121, H2233, H2859, H2945, H3187, H4138, H4940, H5387, H5712, G10850, G36140, G36240, G39650

(Go back to: [Amos 3:2](#))

famine

Definition:

The term “famine” refers to an extreme lack of food throughout a country or region, usually due to not enough rain.

- Food crops can fail from natural causes such as lack of rain, crop disease, or insects.
- Food shortages can also be caused by people, such as enemies who destroy crops.
- In the Bible, God sometimes caused famine as a way to punish nations when they sinned against him.
- In Amos 8:11 the term “famine” is used figuratively to refer to a time when God punished his people by not speaking to them. This could be translated with the word for “famine” in your language, or with a phrase such as “extreme lack” or “severe deprivation.”

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 21:11-12
- Acts 7:11
- Genesis 12:10
- Genesis 45:6
- Jeremiah 11:21-23
- Luke 4:25
- Matthew 24:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3720, H7458, H7459, G30420

(Go back to: [Amos 8:11](#))

fear, afraid, frighten

Definition:

The terms "fear" refers to the unpleasant emotion a person feels when experiencing a potential threat to their safety or well-being. In the Bible, however, the term "fear" can also mean an attitude of worship, respect, awe, or obedience toward another person, usually someone powerful such as God or a king.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "fear" can be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: "be afraid;" "deeply respect;" or "deep respect;" "revere;" or "reverence;" or perhaps "be in awe of."
- The phrase "fear not" could also be translated as "do not be afraid" or "stop being afraid."
- The sentence "The fear of God fell on all of them" might be translated in various ways. Some possibilities include: "Suddenly they all felt a deep awe and respect for God;" or "Immediately, they all felt very amazed and revered God deeply;" or "Right then, they all felt very afraid of God (because of his great power)."

(See also: awe, [Yahweh](#), [Lord](#), [marvel](#), power)

Bible References:

- 1 John 4:18
- Acts 2:43
- Acts 19:15-17
- Genesis 50:21
- Isaiah 11:3-5
- Job 6:14
- Jonah 1:9
- Luke 12:5
- Matthew 10:28
- Proverbs 10:24-25

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0367, H0926, H1204, H1481, H1672, H1674, H1763, H2119, H2296, H2727, H2729, H2730, H2731, H2844, H2849, H2865, H3016, H3025, H3068, H3372, H3373, H3374, H4032, H4034, H4035, H4116, H4172, H6206, H6342, H6343, H6345, H6427, H7264, H7267, H7297, H7374, H7461, H7493, H8175, G08700, G11670, G11680, G11690, G16300, G17190, G21240, G21250, G29620, G53980, G53990, G54000, G54010

(Go back to: [Amos 3:8](#))

feast, feasting

Definition:

The term “feast” is a very general term that refers to an event where people gather to celebrate something by eating a large meal together. In biblical times, a feast sometimes lasted for several days or more.

- Often there are special kinds of food that are eaten at a certain feast.
- The religious festivals that God commanded the Jews to celebrate usually included having a feast together. For this reason the festivals are often called “feasts.”
- In biblical times, kings and other rich and powerful people often gave feasts to entertain their family or friends.
- In the story about the lost son, the father had a special feast prepared to celebrate the return of his son.
- The term to “feast” could also be translated as to “eat lavishly” or to “celebrate by eating lots of food” or to “eat a special, large meal.”
- Depending on the context, “feast” could be translated as “celebrating together with a large meal” or “a meal with a lot of food” or “a celebration meal.”

(See also: festival, banquet)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:12-14
- Genesis 26:30
- Genesis 29:22
- Genesis 40:20
- Jude 1:12-13
- Luke 2:43
- Luke 14:7-9
- Matthew 22:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0398, H2077, H2282, H3899, H3900, H4150, H4797, H4960, H7646, H8057, H8354, G00260, G10620, G11730, G18590, G21650, G49100

(Go back to: [Amos 5:21](#); [8:10](#))

fig

Definition:

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

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

Bible References:

- Habakkuk 3:17
- James 3:12
- Luke 13:7
- Mark 11:14
- Matthew 7:17
- Matthew 21:18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1061, H1690, H6291, H8384, G36530, G48080, G48100

(Go back to: [Amos 4:9](#))

fire, firebrands, firepans, fireplace, firepot

Definition:

Fire is the heat, light, and flames that are produced when something is burned.

- Burning wood by fire turns the wood into ashes.
- Fire could also refer to lightning in the context of a storm or it being from heaven.
- The term “fire” is also used figuratively, usually referring to judgment or purification.
- The final judgment of unbelievers is in the fire of hell.
- Fire is used to refine gold and other metals. In the Bible, this process is used to explain how God refines people through difficult things that happen in their lives.
- The phrase “baptize with fire” could also be translated as “cause to experience suffering in order to be purified.”

(See also: pure)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 16:18-20
- 2 Kings 1:10
- 2 Thessalonians 1:8
- Acts 7:29-30
- John 15:6
- Luke 3:16
- Matthew 3:12
- Nehemiah 1:3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0215, H0217, H0398, H0784, H0800, H0801, H1197, H1200, H1513, H2734, H3341, H3857, H4071, H4168, H5135, H6315, H8316, G04390, G04400, G10670, G27410, G44420, G44430, G44470, G44480, G44510, G53940, G54570

(Go back to: [Amos 1:4](#); [1:7](#); [1:10](#); [1:12](#); [1:14](#); [2:2](#); [2:5](#); [7:4](#))

firstfruits

Definition:

The term “firstfruits” refers to a portion of the first crop of fruits and vegetables that was reaped during each harvest season.

- The Israelites offered these first fruits to God as a sacrificial offering.
- This term is also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to a firstborn son as being the first fruits of the family. That is, because he was the first son to be born into that family, he was the one who carried on the family name and honor.
- Because Jesus rose from the dead, he is called the “firstfruits” of all believers in him, believers who have died but who will some day come back to life.
- Believers in Jesus are also called the “firstfruits” of all creation, indicating the special privilege and position of those whom Jesus redeemed and called to be his people.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal use of this term could be translated as “first portion (of crops)” or “first part of the harvest.”
- If possible, the figurative uses should be translated literally, to allow for different meanings in different contexts. This will also show the correlation between the literal meaning and the figurative uses.

(See also: firstborn)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- Exodus 23:16-17
- James 1:18
- Jeremiah 2:3
- Psalms 105:36

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1061, H6529, H7225, G05360

(Go back to: [Amos 6:1](#))

forgive, forgiven, forgiveness, pardon, pardoned

Definition:

To forgive someone means to not hold a grudge against that person even though they did something hurtful. "Forgiveness" is the act of forgiving someone.

- Forgiving someone often means not punishing that person for something he has done wrong.
- This term can be used figuratively to mean "cancel," as in the expression "forgive a debt."
- When people confess their sins, God forgives them based on Jesus' sacrificial death on the cross.
- Jesus taught his disciples to forgive others as he has forgiven them.

The term "pardon" means to forgive and not punish someone for his sin.

- This word has the same meaning as "forgive" but may also include the meaning of a formal decision to not punish someone who is guilty.
- In a court of law, a judge can pardon a person found guilty of a crime.
- Even though we are guilty of sin, Jesus Christ pardoned us from being punished in hell, based on his sacrificial death on the cross.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "forgive" could be translated as "pardon" or "cancel" or "release" or "not hold against" (someone).
- The term "forgiveness" could be translated by a word or phrase that means "practice of not resenting" or "declaring (someone) as not guilty" or "the act of pardoning."
- If the language has a word for a formal decision to forgive, that word could be used to translate "pardon."

(See also: [guilt](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 50:17
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Deuteronomy 29:20-21
- Joshua 24:19-20
- 2 Kings 5:17-19
- Psalms 25:11
- Psalms 25:17-19
- Isaiah 55:6-7
- Isaiah 40:2
- Luke 5:21
- Acts 8:22
- Ephesians 4:31-32
- Colossians 3:12-14
- 1 John 2:12

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **7:10** But Esau had already **forgiven** Jacob, and they were happy to see each other again.
- **13:15** Then Moses climbed the mountain again and prayed that God would **forgive** the people. God listened to Moses and **forgave** them.
- **17:13** David repented of his sin and God **forgave** him.

- **21:5** In the New Covenant, God would write his law on the people's hearts, the people would know God personally, they would be his people, and God would **forgive** their sins.
- **29:1** One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I **forgive** my brother when he sins against me?"
- **29:8** I **forgave** your debt because you begged me.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the **forgiveness** of sins."

Word Data:

- H5546, H5547, H3722, H5375, H5545, H5547, H7521, G85900, G86300, G54830

(Go back to: [Amos 9 General Notes](#))

found, founder, foundation

Definition:

The verb “found” means build, create, or lay a base for. The phrase “founded on” means supported by or based on. A “foundation” is the base of support on which something is built or created.

- The foundation of a house or building must be strong and dependable in order to support the entire structure.
- The term “foundation” can also refer to the beginning of something or to the time when something was first created.
- In a figurative sense, believers in Christ are compared to a building that is founded on the teachings of the apostles and prophets, with Christ himself being the cornerstone of the building.
- A “foundation stone” was a stone that was laid as part of the foundation. These stones were tested to make sure they were strong enough to support an entire building.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “before the foundation of the world” could be translated as “before the creation of the world” or “before the time when the world first existed” or “before everything was first created.”
- The term “founded on” could be translated as “securely built on” or “firmly based on.”
- Depending on the context, “foundation” could be translated as “strong base” or “solid support” or “beginning” or “creation.”

(See also: cornerstone, create)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:37-38
- 2 Chronicles 3:1-3
- Ezekiel 13:13-14
- Luke 14:29
- Matthew 13:35
- Matthew 25:34

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0134, H0787, H2713, H3245, H3247, H3248, H4143, H4144, H4146, H4328, H4349, H4527, H8356, G23100, G23110, G26020

(Go back to: [Amos 9:6](#))

freewill offering

Definition:

A freewill offering was a type of sacrifice to God that was not required by the Law of Moses. It was a person's own choice to give this offering.

- If the freewill offering was an animal to be sacrificed, the animal was permitted to have slight defects since it was a voluntary offering.
- The Israelites ate the sacrificed animal as part of a celebration feast.
- When a freewill offering could be given, this was a cause of rejoicing for Israel since it showed that the harvest had been good so that the people had plenty of food.
- The book of Ezra describes a different type of freewill offering that was brought for rebuilding the temple. This offering consisted of gold and silver money, as well as bowls and other objects made of gold and silver.

(See also: [burnt offering](#), Ezra, [feast](#), [grain offering](#), guilt offering, [law](#), sin offering)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 29:6
- 2 Chronicles 35:7-9
- Deuteronomy 12:17
- Exodus 36:2-4
- Leviticus 7:15-16

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5068, H5071

(Go back to: [Amos 4:5](#))

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: [Amos 2:9](#); [6:12](#); [9:14](#))

gate, gate bars, gatekeeper, gateposts, gateway

Definition:

The term "gate" refers to an access point in a fence, wall, or other kind of barrier that surrounds a house, property, city, etc.

- A city gate could be opened to allow people, animals, and cargo to travel in and out of the city.
- To protect the city, its walls and gates were thick and strong. Gates were closed and locked with a metal or wooden bar to prevent enemy soldiers from entering the city.
- A "bar" for a gate refers to a wood or metal bar that can be moved into place so that the doors of the gate cannot be opened from the outside.
- In Bible times, a city gate was often the social center for that town or city. It was a place where news of current events was exchanged between people, where business transactions occurred, and where civil judgments were made.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate "gate" could be "door" or "wall opening" or "barrier" or "entranceway."
- The phrase "bars of the gate" could be translated as "gate bolts" or "wooden beams to lock the gate" or "metal locking rods of the gate."

Bible References:

- Acts 9:24
- Acts 10:18
- Deuteronomy 21:18-19
- Genesis 19:1
- Genesis 24:60
- Matthew 7:13

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1817, H5592, H6607, H8179, G23740, G44390, G44400

(Go back to: [Amos 5:10](#); [5:12](#); [5:15](#))

Gilead, Gileadite

Definition:

Gilead was the name of a mountainous region east of the Jordan river where the Israelite tribes of Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh lived.

- This region was also referred to as the “hill country of Gilead” or “Mount Gilead.”
- “Gilead” was also the name of several men in the Old Testament. One of these men was the grandson of Manasseh. Another Gilead was the father of Jephthah.

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

(See also: Gad, Jephthah, Manasseh, Reuben, twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:22
- 1 Samuel 11:1
- Amos 1:3
- Deuteronomy 2:36-37
- Genesis 31:21
- Genesis 37:25-26

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1568, H1569

(Go back to: [Amos 1:3](#); [1:13](#))

Gilgal

Facts:

Gilgal was a town north of Jericho and was the first place that the Israelites camped after crossing the Jordan River to enter Canaan.

- At Gilgal, Joshua set up twelve stones taken from the dry river bed of the Jordan River that they had just crossed over.
- Gilgal was the city that Elijah and Elisha were leaving as they crossed the Jordan when Elijah was taken up to heaven.
- There were also several other places called “Gilgal” in the Old Testament.
- The word “gilgal” means “circle of stones,” perhaps referring to a place where a circular altar was built.
- In the Old Testament, this name almost always occurs as “the gilgal.” This may indicate that it was not a specific place name but rather was a description of a certain kind of place.

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

(See also: [Elijah](#), [Elisha](#), [Jericho](#), [Jordan River](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 7:15-17
- 2 Kings 2:1-2
- Hosea 4:15
- Judges 2:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1537

(Go back to: [Amos 4:4](#); [5:5](#))

God

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “God” refers to the eternal being who created the universe out of nothing. God exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God’s personal name is “Yahweh.”

- God has always existed; he existed before anything else existed, and he will continue to exist forever.
- He is the only true God and has authority over everything in the universe.
- God is perfectly righteous, infinitely wise, holy, sinless, just, merciful, and loving.
- He is a covenant-keeping God, who always fulfills his promises.
- People were created to worship God and he is the only one they should worship.
- God revealed his name as “Yahweh,” which means “he is” or “I am” or “the One who (always) exists.”
- The Bible also teaches about false “gods,” which are nonliving idols that people wrongly worship.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate “God” could include “Deity” or “Creator” or “Supreme Being” or “Supreme Creator” or “Infinite Sovereign Lord” or “Eternal Supreme Being.”
- Consider how God is referred to in a local or national language. There may also already be a word for “God” in the language being translated. If so, it is important to make sure that this word fits the characteristics of the one true God as described above.
- Many languages capitalize the first letter of the word for the one true God, to distinguish it from the word for a false god. Another way to make this distinction would be to use different terms for “God” and “god.”
NOTE: In the biblical text, when a person who does not worship Yahweh speaks about Yahweh and uses the word “god,” it is acceptable to render the term without a capital letter in reference to Yahweh (see Jonah 1:6, 3:9).
- The phrase “I will be their God and they will be my people” could also be translated as “I, God, will rule over these people and they will worship me.”

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

(See also: create, false god, God the Father, Holy Spirit, false god, Son of God, [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Samuel 10:7-8
- 1 Timothy 4:10
- Colossians 1:16
- Deuteronomy 29:14-16
- Ezra 3:1-2
- Genesis 1:2
- Hosea 4:11-12
- Isaiah 36:6-7
- James 2:20
- Jeremiah 5:5
- John 1:3
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Lamentations 3:43
- Micah 4:5
- Philippians 2:6
- Proverbs 24:12

- Psalms 47:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:1 God** created the universe and everything in it in six days.
- **1:15 God** made man and woman in his own image.
- **5:3** "I am **God** Almighty. I will make a covenant with you."
- **9:14 God** said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am Yahweh, the **God** of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **10:2** Through these plagues, **God** showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's gods.
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of Yahweh, the true **God**.
- **22:7** "You, my son, will be called the prophet of the **Most High God** who will prepare the people to receive the Messiah!"
- **24:9** There is only one **God**. But John heard **God** the Father speak, and saw Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit when he baptized Jesus.
- **25:7** "Worship only the Lord your **God** and only serve him."
- **28:1** "There is only one who is good, and that is **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.
- **50:16** But some day **God** will create a new heaven and a new earth that will be perfect.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0136, H0305, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0433, H2486, H2623, H3068, H3069, H3863, H4136, H6697, G01120, G05160, G09320, G09350, G10960, G11400, G20980, G21240, G21280, G21500, G21520, G21530, G22990, G23040, G23050, G23120, G23130, G23140, G23150, G23160, G23170, G23180, G23190, G23200, G33610, G37850, G41510, G52070, G53770, G54630, G55370, G55380

(Go back to: [Amos 2:8](#); [3:13](#); [4:11](#); [4:12](#); [4:13](#); [5:14](#); [5:15](#); [5:16](#); [5:26](#); [5:27](#); [6:8](#); [6:14](#); [8:14](#); [9:15](#))

Gomorrah

Facts:

Gomorrah was a city located in a fertile valley near Sodom, where Abraham's nephew Lot chose to live.

- The exact location of Gomorrah and Sodom is unknown, but there are indications that they may have been located directly south of the Salt Sea, near the Valley of Siddim.
- There were many kings at war in the region where Sodom and Gomorrah were located.
- When Lot's family was captured in a conflict between Sodom and other cities, Abraham and his men rescued them.
- Not long after that, Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed by God because of the wickedness of the people who lived there.

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

(See also: Abraham, Babylon, Lot, Salt Sea, [Sodom](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 2:6
- Genesis 10:19
- Genesis 14:1-2
- Genesis 18:21
- Isaiah 1:9
- Matthew 10:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6017

(Go back to: [Amos 4:11](#))

good, right, pleasant, better, best

Definition:

The term “good” generally refers to a positive evaluation of the quality of something or someone, often in a moral or emotional sense. However, the term conveys various nuances throughout the Bible depending on the context.

- Something that is “good” could be emotionally pleasant, morally right, excellent, helpful, suitable, or profitable.
- In the Bible, the general meaning of “good” is often contrasted with “evil.”

Translation Suggestions:

- The general term for “good” in the target language should be used wherever this general meaning is accurate and natural, especially in contexts where it is contrasted to evil.
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this term could include “kind” or “excellent” or “pleasing to God” or “righteous” or “morally upright” or “profitable.”
- “Good land” could be translated as “fertile land” or “productive land”; a “good crop” could be translated as a “plentiful harvest” or “large amount of crops.”
- The phrase “do good to” means to do something that benefits others and could be translated as “be kind to” or “help” or “benefit” someone or “cause someone to prosper.”
- To “do good on the Sabbath” means to “do things that help others on the Sabbath.”
- Depending on the context, ways to translate the term “goodness” could include “blessing” or “kindness” or “moral perfection” or “righteousness” or “purity.”

(See also: [righteous](#), prosper, [evil](#))

Bible References:

- Galatians 5:22-24
- Genesis 1:12
- Genesis 2:9
- Genesis 2:17
- James 3:13
- Romans 2:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:4** God saw that what he had created was **good**.
- **1:11** God planted the tree of the knowledge of **good** and evil.
- **1:12** Then God said, “It is not **good** for man to be alone.”
- **2:4** “God just knows that as soon as you eat it, you will be like God and will understand **good** and evil like he does.”
- **8:12** “You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, but God used the evil for **good!**”
- **14:15** Joshua was a **good** leader because he trusted and obeyed God.
- **18:13** Some of these kings were **good** men who ruled justly and worshiped God.
- **28:1** “**Good** teacher, what must I do to have eternal life?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me ‘**good**?’ There is only one who is **good**, and that is God.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0117, H0145, H0155, H0202, H0239, H0410, H1580, H1926, H1935, H2532, H2617, H2623, H2869, H2895, H2896, H2898, H3190, H3191, H3276, H3474, H3788, H3966, H4261, H4399, H5232, H5750, H6287, H6643, H6743, H7075, H7368, H7399, H7443, H7999, H8231, H8232, H8233, H8389, H8458, G00140, G00150, G00180, G00190, G05150, G07440, G08650, G09790, G13800, G20950, G20970, G21060, G21070, G21080, G21090, G21140, G21150, G21330, G21400, G21620, G21630, G21740, G22930, G25650, G25670, G25700, G25730, G28870, G29860, G31400, G36170, G37760, G41470, G46320, G46740, G48510, G52230, G52240, G53580, G55420, G55430, G55440

(Go back to: [Amos 5:14](#); [5:15](#); [9:4](#))

grain offering

Definition:

A grain offering was a gift of wheat or barley flour offered to God, often after a burnt offering.

- The grain used for the grain offering had to be finely ground up. Sometimes it was cooked before being offered, but other times it was left uncooked.
- Oil and salt were added to the grain flour, but no yeast or honey was permitted.
- Part of the grain offering was burned up and part of it was eaten by the priests.

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

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:27-29
- Exodus 29:41-42
- Judges 13:19
- Leviticus 2:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4503, H8641

(Go back to: [Amos 5:22](#); [5:25](#))

grain, grainfields

Definition:

The term "grain" usually refers to the seed of a food plant such as wheat, barley, corn, millet, or rice. It can also refer to the whole plant.

- In the Bible, the main grains that are referred to are wheat and barley.
- A head of grain is the part of the plant that holds the grain.
- Note that some older Bible versions use the word "corn" to refer to grain in general. In modern English however, "corn" only refers to one type of grain.

(See also: [head](#), [wheat](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 42:3
- Genesis 42:26-28
- Genesis 43:1-2
- Luke 6:2
- Mark 2:24
- Matthew 13:7-9
- Ruth 1:22

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1250, H1430, H1715, H2233, H2591, H3759, H3899, H7054, H7383, H7641, H7668, G02480, G25900, G34500, G46210, G47190

(Go back to: [Amos 8:5](#))

grape, grapevine

Definition:

A grape is a small, round, smooth-skinned berry fruit that grows in clusters on vines. The juice of grapes is used in making wine.

- There are different colors of grapes, such as light green, purple, or red.
- Individual grapes can be around one to three centimeters in size.
- People grow grapes in gardens called vineyards. These normally consist of long rows of vines.
- Grapes were a very important food during Bible times and having vineyards was a sign of wealth.
- In order to keep grapes from rotting, people would often dry them. Dried grapes are called “raisins” and they were used to make raisin cakes.
- Jesus told a parable about a grape vineyard to teach his disciples about God’s kingdom.

(See also: vine, [vineyard](#), [wine](#))

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 23:24
- Hosea 9:10
- Job 15:33
- Luke 6:43-44
- Matthew 7:15-17
- Matthew 21:33

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0811, H0891, H1154, H1155, H1210, H3196, H5955, H6025, H6528, G02880, G47180

(Go back to: [Amos 9:13](#))

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: [Amos 8:14](#))

hand

Definition:

The word “hand” refers to the part of the body at the end of the arm. This term is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s power, control, or action, whether it be in reference to God or in reference to a human person.

Some of the various uses of the term “hand” include the following:

- The term “hand” can be used figuratively to refer to the position of being “beside” a person, an object, or a location.
- To “lay a hand on” means to “harm.” To “save from the hand of” means to prevent someone from being harmed by another person.
- The position of being “on the right hand” means “on the right side” or “to the right.”
- The expression “by the hand of” someone means “by” or “through” the action of that person. For example, the phrase “by the hand of the Lord” means that God caused something to happen.
- Expressions such as “hand over to” or “deliver into the hands of” refer to causing someone to be under the control or power of someone else.
- The term “laying on of hands” can refer to placing a hand on a person in order to dedicate that person to God’s service, to pray for healing, or to ask God to bless that person.
- When Paul says “written by my hand,” it means that he himself wrote that part of the letter rather than speaking it to someone else to write down.

Translation Suggestions

- These expressions and other figures of speech could be translated using other figurative expressions that have the same meaning. Or the meaning could be translated using direct, literal language (see examples above).
- The expression “handed him the scroll” could also be translated as “gave him the scroll” or “put the scroll in his hand.” It was not given to him permanently, but just for the purpose of using it at that time.
- An expression such as “delivered them into the hands of their enemies” or “handed them over to their enemies,” could be translated as “allowed their enemies to conquer them” or “caused them to be captured by their enemies” or “empowered their enemies to gain control over them.”
- To “die by the hand of” could be translated as “be killed by.”
- The expression “on the right hand of” could be translated as “on the right side of.”
- In regard to Jesus being “seated at the right hand of God,” if this does not communicate in the language that it refers to a position of high honor and equal authority, a different expression with that meaning could be used. Or a short explanation could be added: “on the right side of God, in the position of highest authority.”

(See also: power, right hand, honor, bless)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:25
- Acts 8:17
- Acts 11:21
- Genesis 9:5
- Genesis 14:20
- John 3:35
- Mark 7:32
- Matthew 6:3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2026, H2651, H2947, H2948, H3027, H3028, H3225, H3231, H3233, H3709, H7126, H7138, H8040, H8042, H8168, G07100, G11880, G14480, G14510, G21760, G29020, G40840, G44740, G54950, G54960, G54970

(Go back to: [Amos 1:8](#); [5:19](#); [7:7](#); [9:2](#))

head

Definition:

The word “head” refers to the uppermost body part of a human body, above the neck. This term is often used figuratively to mean many different things, including “top,” “first,” “beginning,” “source,” and other concepts.

Some examples of various uses of the term “head” include:

- The expression “no razor will ever touch his head” means that he should never cut or shave his hair.
- The expression “let their blood be on his own head” means that the man is responsible for their deaths and will receive the punishment for that.
- The expression “heads of grain” refers to the top part of wheat or barley plants that contains the seeds. Similarly, the expression “head of a mountain” refers to the top part of the mountain.
- The term “head” can also refer to the beginning or source of something, or the first in a series of things (can be objects or people).
- Often the term “head” refers to the most important person in a group or to a person who is in authority over others. For example, the phrase “You have made me the head over nations” means “You have made me the ruler...” or “You have given me authority over....”

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, the term “head” could be translated as “authority” or “ruler” or “the one who is responsible for.”
- The expression “will be on his own head” could be translated as “will be on him” or “he will be punished for” or “he will be held responsible for” or “he will be considered guilty for.”
- Depending on the context, some other ways to translate this term might include “top” or “beginning” or “source” or “leader.”

(See also: chief, [grain](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 1:51-54
- 1 Kings 8:1-2
- 1 Samuel 9:22
- Colossians 2:10
- Colossians 2:19
- Numbers 1:4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0441, H1270, H1538, H3852, H4425, H4761, H4763, H5110, H5324, H6285, H6287, H6797, H6915, H6936, H7139, H7144, H7146, H7217, H7226, H7218, H7541, H7636, H7641, H7872, G03460, G07550, G27750, G27760, G47190

(Go back to: [Amos 1:2](#); [2:7](#); [6:7](#); [8:10](#); [9:1](#); [9:3](#))

heart

Definition:

The term “heart” refers to the internal bodily organ that pumps blood throughout the body in people and animals. However, in the Bible the term “heart” is often used figuratively to refer to a person’s thoughts, emotions, desires, or will.

- To have a “hard heart” is a common expression that means a person stubbornly refuses to obey God.
- The expressions “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” mean to do something with complete sincerity, commitment, or willingness, holding nothing back.
- The expression “take it to heart” means to treat something seriously and apply it to one’s life.
- The term “brokenhearted” describes a person who is very sad. That person has been deeply hurt emotionally.

Translation Suggestions

- Some languages use a different body part such as “stomach” or “liver” to refer to these ideas.
- Other languages may use one word to express some of these concepts and another word to express others.
- If “heart” or other body part does not have this meaning, some languages may need to express this literally with terms such as “thoughts” or “emotions” or “desires.”
- Depending on the context, “with all my heart” or “with my whole heart” could be translated as “with all my energy” or “with complete dedication” or “completely” or “with total commitment.”
- The expression “take it to heart” could be translated as “treat it seriously” or “carefully think about it.”
- The expression “hard-hearted” could also be translated as “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to obey” or “continually disobeying God.”
- Ways to translate “brokenhearted” could include “very sad” or “feeling deeply hurt.”

(See also: hard)

Bible References:

- 1 John 3:17
- 1 Thessalonians 2:4
- 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15
- Acts 8:22
- Acts 15:9
- Luke 8:15
- Mark 2:6
- Matthew 5:8
- Matthew 22:37

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1079, H2436, H2504, H2910, H3519, H3629, H3820, H3821, H3823, H3824, H3825, H3826, H4578, H5315, H5640, H7130, H7307, H7356, H7907, G06740, G12820, G12710, G21330, G25880, G25890, G46410, G46980, G55900

(Go back to: [Amos 2:16](#); [6:8](#))

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: [Amos 9:2](#); [9:6](#))

holy, holiness, unholy, sacred

Definition:

The terms "holy" and "holiness" refer to the character of God that is totally set apart and separated from everything that is sinful and imperfect.

- Only God is absolutely holy. He makes people and things holy.
- A person who is holy belongs to God and has been set apart for the purpose of serving God and bringing him glory.
- An object that God has declared to be holy is one that he has set apart for his glory and use, such as an altar that is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to him.
- People cannot approach him unless he allows them to, because he is holy and they are merely human beings, sinful and imperfect.
- In the Old Testament, God set apart the priests as holy for special service to him. They had to be ceremonially cleansed from sin in order to approach God.
- God also set apart as holy certain places and things that belonged to him or in which he revealed himself, such as his temple.

Literally, the term "unholy" means "not holy." It describes someone or something that does not honor God.

- This word is used to describe someone who dishonors God by rebelling against him.
- A thing that is called "unholy" could be described as being common, profane or unclean. It does not belong to God.

The term "sacred" describes something that relates to worshiping God or to the pagan worship of false gods.

- In the Old Testament, the term "sacred" was oftentimes used to describe the stone pillars and other objects used in the worship of false gods. This could also be translated as "religious."
- "Sacred songs" and "sacred music" refer to music that was sung or played for God's glory. This could be translated as "music for worshiping Yahweh" or "songs that praise God."
- The phrase "sacred duties" referred to the "religious duties" or "rituals" that a priest performed to lead people in worshiping God. It could also refer to the rituals performed by a pagan priest to worship a false god

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate "holy" might include "set apart for God" or "belonging to God" or "completely pure" or "perfectly sinless" or "separated from sin."
- To "make holy" is often translated as "sanctify" in English. It could also be translated as "set apart (someone) for God's glory."
- Ways to translate "unholy" could include "not holy" or "not belonging to God" or "not honoring to God" or "not godly."
- In some contexts, "unholy" could be translated as "unclean."

(See also: Holy Spirit, consecrate, sanctify, set apart)

Bible References:

- Genesis 28:22
- 2 Kings 3:2
- Lamentations 4:1
- Ezekiel 20:18-20
- Matthew 7:6

- Mark 8:38
- Acts 7:33
- Acts 11:8
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 12:3-5
- Colossians 1:22
- 1 Thessalonians 3:13
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:16** He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **9:12** "You are standing on **holy** ground."
- **13:1** "If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation."
- **13:5** "Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**."
- **22:5** "So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God."
- **50:2** As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H2455, H2623, H4676, H4720, H6918, H6922, H6942, H6944, H6948, G00370, G00380, G00400, G00400, G00410, G00420, G04620, G18590, G21500, G24120, G24130, G28390, G37410, G37420

(Go back to: [Amos 2:7](#))

horse, warhorse, horseback

Definition:

A horse is a large, four-legged animal that in Bible times was mostly used for war and for transporting people.

- Some horses were used to pull carts or chariots, while others were used to carry individual riders.
- In the Bible, horses were considered to be valuable possessions and a measure of wealth, mainly because of their use in war. For example, part of King Solomon's great wealth was the thousands of horses and chariots that he had.
- Animals that are similar to the horse are the donkey and the mule.
- Horses often wear a bit and bridle on their heads so they can be guided.

(See also: chariot, donkey, Solomon)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:4
- 2 Kings 2:11
- Exodus 14:23-25
- Ezekiel 23:5-7
- Zechariah 6:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0047, H5483, H5484, H6571, H7409, G24620

(Go back to: [Amos 2:15](#); [4:10](#); [6:12](#))

house, household

Definition:

The term "house" refers to a small building, shelter, or tent, usually the place where a family sleeps. The term is often used figuratively in the Bible to mean various concepts such as "household" or "descendants," etc.

- Sometimes the term "house" means "household," referring to all the people who live together in one house or multi-structure home compound (whether buildings or tents), including family members and all their servants.
- Sometimes the term "house" means "family" or "descendants," referring to all the people related to or descended from a particular person. For example, the phrase "house of David" refers to all the descendants of King David.
- The terms "house of God" and "house of Yahweh" refer to the tabernacle or temple. These expressions can also refer generally to a central place where Yahweh was worshipped.
- The phrase "house of Israel" can refer generally to the entire nation of Israel or more specifically to the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, "house" could be translated as "household" or "people" or "family" or "descendants" or "temple" or "dwelling place."
- The phrase "house of David" could be translated as "clan of David" or "family of David" or "descendants of David." Related expressions could be translated in a similar way.
- Different ways to translate "house of Israel" could include "people of Israel" or "Israel's descendants" or "Israelites."
- The phrase "house of Yahweh" could be translated as "Yahweh's temple" or "place where Yahweh is worshiped" or "place where Yahweh meets with his people" or "where Yahweh dwells." The phrase "house of God" could be translated in a similar way.

(See also: descendant, house of God, tabernacle, [temple](#), house of David, kingdom of Israel)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:42
- Acts 7:49
- Genesis 39:4
- Genesis 41:40
- Luke 8:39
- Matthew 10:6
- Matthew 15:24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1004, H1005, G36090, G36130, G36140, G36240

(Go back to: [Amos 1:5](#); [2:8](#); [3:15](#); [5:1](#); [5:3](#); [5:4](#); [5:6](#); [5:11](#); [5:19](#); [5:25](#); [6:1](#); [6:10](#); [6:11](#); [6:14](#); [7:9](#); [7:10](#); [7:13](#); [7:16](#); [9:8](#); [9:9](#))

household

Definition:

The term “household” refers to all the people who live together in a house, including family members and all their servants.

- Managing a household would involves directing the servants and also taking care of the property.
- Sometimes “household” can refer figuratively to the whole family line of someone, especially his descendants.

(See also: [house](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 7:10
- Galatians 6:10
- Genesis 7:1
- Genesis 34:19
- John 4:53
- Matthew 10:25
- Matthew 10:36
- Philippians 4:22

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1004, H5657, G23220, G36090, G36140, G36150, G36160, G36230, G36240

(Go back to: [Amos 6:11](#))

iniquity

Definition:

The term “iniquity” is a word that is very similar in meaning to the term “sin,” but may more specifically refer to conscious acts of wrongdoing or great wickedness.

- The word “iniquity” literally means a twisting or distorting (of the law). It refers to major injustice.
- Iniquity could be described as deliberate, harmful actions against other people.
- Other definitions of iniquity include “perversity” and “depravity,” which are both words that describe conditions of terrible sin.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “iniquity” could be translated as “wickedness” or “perverse actions” or “harmful acts.”
- Often, “iniquity” occurs in the same text as the word “sin” and “transgression” so it is important to have different ways of translating these terms.

(See also: [sin](#), [transgress](#), trespass)

Bible References:

- Daniel 9:13
- Exodus 34:5-7
- Genesis 15:14-16
- Genesis 44:16
- Habakkuk 2:12
- Matthew 13:41
- Matthew 23:27-28
- Micah 3:10

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H1942, H5753, H5758, H5766, H5771, H5932, H5999, H7562, G00920, G00930, G04580, G38920, G41890

(Go back to: [Amos 3:2](#))

Israel, Israelites

Facts:

The term "Israel" is the name that God gave to Jacob. Often it refers to the nation that is descended from him.

- The name Israel probably means "He struggles with God."
- The descendants of Jacob became known as the "sons of Israel" or the "people of Israel" or the "nation of Israel" or the "Israelites."
- God formed his covenant with the people of Israel. They were his chosen people.
- The nation of Israel consisted of twelve tribes.
- Soon after King Solomon died, Israel was divided into two kingdoms: the southern kingdom, called "Judah," and the northern kingdom, called "Israel."
- Often the term "Israel" can be translated as "the people of Israel" or "the nation of Israel," depending on the context.

(See also: [Jacob](#), kingdom of Israel, Judah, [nation](#), twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:1
- 1 Kings 8:2
- Acts 2:36
- Acts 7:24
- Acts 13:23
- John 1:49-51
- Luke 24:21
- Mark 12:29
- Matthew 2:6
- Matthew 27:9
- Philippians 3:4-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:15** The descendants of the twelve sons became the twelve tribes of **Israel**.
- **9:3** The Egyptians forced the **Israelites** to build many buildings and even whole cities.
- **9:5** A certain **Israelite** woman gave birth to a baby boy.
- **10:1** They said, "This is what the God of **Israel** says, 'Let my people go!'"
- **14:12** But despite all this, the people of *_Israel_* complained and grumbled against God and against Moses.
- **15:9** God fought for **Israel** that day. He caused the Amorites to be confused and he sent large hailstones that killed many of the Amorites.
- **15:12** After this battle, God gave each tribe of **Israel** *its own section of the Promised Land. Then God gave _Israel_ peace along all its borders.*
- **16:16** So God punished *_Israel_* again for worshipping idols.
- **43:6** "Men of **Israel**, Jesus was a man who did many mighty signs and wonders by the power of God, as you have seen and already know."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3478, H3479, H3481, H3482, G09350, G24740, G24750

(Go back to: [Introduction to Amos](#); [Amos 1:1](#); [2:6](#); [2:11](#); [3:1](#); [3:12](#); [3:14](#); [4:5](#); [4:12](#); [5:1](#); [5:2](#); [5:3](#); [5:4](#); [5:25](#); [6:1](#); [6:14](#); [7:8](#); [7:9](#); [7:10](#); [7:15](#); [7:16](#); [8:2](#); [9:7](#); [9:9](#); [9:14](#))

Jacob, Israel

Facts:

Jacob was the younger twin son of Isaac by Rebekah. God changed his name to "Israel." His descendants became the nation of Israel.

- Jacob is the last of the three patriarchs of the Israelite nation: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The descendants of Jacob's twelve sons became the twelve tribes of Israel.
- The name Jacob is similar to the Hebrew word meaning "heel." As Jacob was being born, he was holding onto the heel of his twin brother Esau. In the Old Testament times, the heel was a body part associated both with attack and with the rear part of a person's body. The Hebrew name Jacob was probably associated with the idea of attacking someone from behind.
- Many years later, God changed Jacob's name to "Israel," which probably means "He struggles with God."
- Jacob married Laban's two daughters, Leah and Rachel, as well as each of their servants, Zilpah and Bilhah. These four women mothered the twelve sons who became the ancestral fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel.
- In the New Testament, a different man named Jacob is listed as being Joseph's father in Matthew's genealogy.

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

(See also: [Israel](#), twelve tribes of Israel, Leah, Rachel, Zilpah, Bilhah, deceive, Esau, Isaac, Rebekah, Laban)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:11
- Acts 7:46
- Genesis 25:26
- Genesis 29:1-3
- Genesis 32:1-2
- John 4:4-5
- Matthew 8:11-13
- Matthew 22:32

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **7:1** As the boys grew up, Rebekah loved **Jacob**, but Isaac loved Esau. **Jacob** loved to stay at home, but Esau loved to hunt.
- **7:7** **Jacob** lived there for many years, and during that time he married and had twelve sons and a daughter. God made him very wealthy.
- **7:8** After twenty years away from his home in Canaan, **Jacob** returned there with his family, his servants, and all his herds of animals.
- **7:10** The covenant promises God had promised to Abraham and then to Isaac now passed on to **Jacob**.
- **8:1** Many years later, when **Jacob** was an old man, he sent his favorite son, Joseph, to check on his brothers who were taking care of the herds.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3290, G23840

(Go back to: [Amos 3:13](#); [6:8](#); [7:2](#); [7:5](#); [8:7](#); [9:8](#))

Jeroboam

Facts:

Jeroboam son of Nebat was the first king of the northern kingdom of Israel around 900-910 BC. Another Jeroboam, son of King Jehoash, ruled over Israel about 120 years later.

- Yahweh gave Jeroboam son of Nebat a prophecy that he would become king after Solomon and that he would rule ten tribes of Israel.
- When Solomon died, the ten northern tribes of Israel rebelled against Solomon's son Rehoboam and instead made Jeroboam their king, leaving Rehoboam as king of only the southern two tribes, Judah and Benjamin.
- Jeroboam became a wicked king who led the people away from worshiping Yahweh and instead set up idols for them to worship. All the other kings of Israel followed Jeroboam's example and were evil like he was.
- Almost 120 years later, another King Jeroboam began ruling the northern kingdom of Israel. This Jeroboam was the son of King Jehoash and was wicked like all the previous kings of Israel had been.
- In spite of the Israelite's wickedness, God had mercy on them and helped this King Jeroboam to gain land and establish boundaries for their territory.

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

(See also: false god, kingdom of Israel, Judah, Solomon)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 5:16-17
- 1 Kings 12:2
- 2 Chronicles 9:29
- 2 Kings 3:1-3
- Amos 1:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **18:8** The other ten tribes of the nation of Israel that rebelled against Rehoboam appointed a man named **Jeroboam** to be their king.
- **18:9 Jeroboam** rebelled against God and caused the people to sin. He built two idols for his people to worship instead of worshiping God at the Temple in the kingdom of Judah.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3379

(Go back to: [Amos 1:1](#); [7:9](#); [7:10](#); [7:11](#))

Jerusalem

Facts:

Jerusalem was originally an ancient Canaanite city that later became the most important city in Israel. It is located about 34 kilometers west of the Salt Sea and just north of Bethlehem. It is still the capital city of Israel today.

- The name "Jerusalem" is first mentioned in the book of Joshua. Other Old Testament names for this city include "Salem" "city of Jebus," and "Zion." Both "Jerusalem" and "Salem," have the root meaning of "peace."
- Jerusalem was originally a Jebusite fortress called "Zion" which King David captured and made into his capital city.
- It was in Jerusalem that David's son Solomon built the first temple in Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, which was the mountain where Abraham had offered his son Isaac to God. The temple was rebuilt there after it was destroyed by the Babylonians.
- Because the temple was in Jerusalem, the major Jewish festivals were celebrated there.
- People normally referred to going "up" to Jerusalem since it is located in the mountains.

(See also: Babylon, Christ, [David](#), Jebusites, Jesus, Solomon, [temple](#), [Zion](#))

Bible References:

- Galatians 4:26-27
- John 2:13
- Luke 4:9-11
- Luke 13:5
- Mark 3:7-8
- Mark 3:20-22
- Matthew 3:6
- Matthew 4:23-25
- Matthew 20:17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:5** David conquered **Jerusalem** and made it his capital city.
- **18:2** In **Jerusalem**, Solomon built the Temple for which his father David had planned and gathered materials.
- **20:7** They (Babylonians) captured the city of **Jerusalem**, destroyed the Temple, and took away all the treasures of the city and the Temple.
- **20:12** So, after seventy years in exile, a small group of Jews returned to the city of **Jerusalem** in Judah.
- **38:1** About three years after Jesus first began preaching and teaching publicly, Jesus told his disciples that he wanted to celebrate this Passover with them in **Jerusalem**, and that he would be killed there.
- **38:2** After Jesus and the disciples arrived in **Jerusalem**, Judas went to the Jewish leaders and offered to betray Jesus to them in exchange for money.
- **42:8** "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in **Jerusalem**, and then go to all people groups everywhere."
- **42:11** Forty days after Jesus rose from the dead, he told his disciples, "Stay in **Jerusalem** until you receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3389, H3390, G24140, G24150, G24190

(Go back to: [Amos 2:5](#))

Joseph (OT)

Facts:

Joseph was Jacob's eleventh son. He was Rachel's first son. The descendants of his two sons Ephraim and Manasseh became two of the tribes of Israel.

- The Hebrew name Joseph is similar to both the Hebrew word meaning "to add, increase" and the Hebrew word meaning "to gather, take away."
- A large portion of the book of Genesis is dedicated to the story of Joseph, how he remained faithful to God throughout his many difficulties and forgave his brothers who had sold him to be a slave in Egypt.
- Eventually God raised Joseph to the second highest place of power in Egypt and used him to save the people of Egypt and the surrounding nations in a time when there was little food. Joseph helped save his own family from starving and brought them to live with him in Egypt.

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

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Ephraim, Manasseh, [Jacob](#), Rachel)

Bible References:

- Genesis 30:22-24
- Genesis 33:1-3
- Genesis 37:1-2
- Genesis 37:23-24
- Genesis 41:55-57
- John 4:4-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:2 Joseph's** brothers hated him because their father loved him most and because Joseph had dreamed that he would be their ruler.
- **8:4** The slave traders took **Joseph** to Egypt.
- **8:5** Even in prison, **Joseph** remained faithful to God, and God blessed him.
- **8:7** God had given **Joseph** the ability to interpret dreams, so Pharaoh had Joseph brought to him from the prison.
- **8:9 Joseph** told the people to store up large amounts of food during the seven years of good harvests.
- **9:2** The Egyptians no longer remembered **Joseph** and all he had done to help them.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3084, H3130, G25000, G25010

(Go back to: [Amos 5:6](#); [5:15](#); [6:6](#))

Judah

Facts:

Judah was Jacob's fourth son. He was Leah's fourth son. His descendants became one of the tribes of Israel.

- The tribe descended from him was known as the "tribe of Judah" or "Judah."
- His name sounds similar to the Hebrew word meaning "praise."
- The tribe of Judah settled in the southern part of Canaan, including the mountainous area to the south of the city of Jerusalem. When used as the name of a region of land, the term "Judah" refers to the land given to the tribe of Judah.
- In the Old Testament, the name Judah is sometimes used to refer to the whole southern kingdom of Israel (similar to how the name Ephraim is sometimes used to refer to the whole northern kingdom).
- King David, King Solomon, and all the kings of the southern kingdom were descendants of Judah. Jesus, too, was a descendant of Judah.
- The words "Jew" and "Judea" come from the name "Judah."

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

(See also: twelve tribes of Israel, Judah (kingdom), Jew, [Judea](#), [Jacob](#), Leah)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 2:1-2
- 1 Kings 1:9
- Genesis 29:35
- Genesis 38:2
- Luke 3:33
- Ruth 1:2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3063

(Go back to: [Amos 2:5](#))

Judea, Judah

Facts:

The term “Judea” refers to an area of land in ancient Israel. It is sometimes used in a narrow sense and other times in a broad sense.

- Sometimes “Judea” is used in a narrow sense to refer only to the province located in the southern part of ancient Israel just west of the Dead Sea. Some translations call this province “Judah.”
- Other times “Judea” has a broad sense and refers to all the provinces of ancient Israel, including Galilee, Samaria, Perea, Idumea and Judea (Judah).
- If translators want to make the distinction clear, the broad sense of Judea could be translated as “Judea Country” and the narrow sense could be translated as “Judea Province,” or “Judah Province” since this is the part of ancient Israel where the tribe of Judah had originally lived.

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

(See also: Galilee, Edom, [Judah](#), Judah, [Samaria](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:14
- Acts 2:9
- Acts 9:32
- Acts 12:19
- John 3:22-24
- Luke 1:5
- Luke 4:44
- Luke 5:17
- Mark 10:1-4
- Matthew 2:1
- Matthew 2:5
- Matthew 2:22-23
- Matthew 3:1-3
- Matthew 19:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: G24530

(Go back to: [Amos 1:1; 2:4; 7:12](#))

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: [Amos 5:7](#); [5:15](#); [5:24](#); [6:12](#); [Notes](#); [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: [Introduction to Amos](#))

king, kingship

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “king” refers to a man who is the supreme ruler of a particular group of people or a particular region of land (or both).

- In biblical times, a king was usually chosen to rule on the basis of family relation to the previous king(s). When a king died, usually his oldest son became the next king.
- The Bible often refers to God as a king who rules over the entire universe (in a general sense) and over his people (in a specific sense).
- The New Testament refers to Jesus as a king in various ways, including: “king of the Jews;” “king of Israel;” and “king of kings.”
- Depending on the context, the term “king” might also be translated as “supreme chief” or “sovereign ruler.”
- The phrase “king of kings” might be translated as “king who rules over all other kings” or “supreme ruler who has authority over all other rulers.”

(See also: authority, Herod Antipas, [kingdom](#), kingdom of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 6:15-16
- 2 Kings 5:18
- 2 Samuel 5:3
- Acts 7:9-10
- Acts 13:22
- John 1:49-51
- Luke 1:5
- Luke 22:24-25
- Matthew 5:35
- Matthew 14:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:6** One night, the Pharaoh, which is what the Egyptians called their kings, had two dreams that disturbed him greatly.
- **16:1** The Israelites had no **king**, so everyone did what they thought was right for them.
- **16:18** Finally, the people asked God for a **king** like all the other nations had.
- **17:5** Eventually, Saul died in battle, and David became **king** of Israel. He was a good **king**, and the people loved him.
- **21:6** God’s prophets also said that the Messiah would be a prophet, a priest, and a **king**.
- **48:14** David was the **king** of Israel, but Jesus is the **king** of the entire universe!

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4427, H4428, H4430, G09350, G09360

(Go back to: [Amos 1:1](#); [1:15](#); [2:1](#); [7:1](#); [7:10](#); [7:13](#))

kingdom

Definition:

A kingdom is a group of people ruled by a king. It also refers to the realm or political regions over which a king or other ruler has control and authority.

- A kingdom can be of any geographical size. A king might govern a nation or country or only one city.
- The term “kingdom” can also refer to a spiritual reign or authority, as in the term “kingdom of God.”
- God is the ruler of all creation, but the term “kingdom of God” especially refers to his reign and authority over the people who have believed in Jesus and who have submitted to his authority.
- The Bible also talks about Satan having a “kingdom” in which he temporarily rules over many things on this earth. His kingdom is evil and is referred to as “darkness.”

Translation Suggestions:

- When referring to a physical region that is ruled over by a king, the term “kingdom” could be translated as “country (ruled by a king)” or “king’s territory” or “region ruled by a king.”
- In a spiritual sense, “kingdom” could be translated as “ruling” or “reigning” or “controlling” or “governing.”
- One way to translate “kingdom of priests” might be “spiritual priests who are ruled by God.”
- The phrase “kingdom of light” could be translated as “God’s reign that is good like light” or “when God, who is light, rules people” or “the light and goodness of God’s kingdom.” It is best to keep the word “light” in this expression since that is a very important term in the Bible.
- Note that the term “kingdom” is different from an empire, in which an emperor rules over several countries.

(See also: authority, [king](#), kingdom of God, kingdom of Israel, [Judah](#), Judah, [priest](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 2:12
- 2 Timothy 4:17-18
- Colossians 1:13-14
- John 18:36
- Mark 3:24
- Matthew 4:7-9
- Matthew 13:19
- Matthew 16:28
- Revelation 1:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:2** God said to Moses and the people of Israel, “If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a **kingdom** of priests, and a holy nation.”
- **18:4** God was angry with Solomon and, as a punishment for Solomon’s unfaithfulness, he promised to divide the nation of Israel in two **kingdoms** after Solomon’s death.
- **18:7** Ten of the tribes of the nation of Israel rebelled against Rehoboam. Only two tribes remained faithful to him. These two tribes became the **kingdom** of Judah.
- **18:8** The other ten tribes of the nation of Israel that rebelled against Rehoboam appointed a man named Jeroboam to be their king. They set up their **kingdom** in the northern part of the land and were called the **kingdom** of Israel.
- **21:8** A king is someone who rules over a **kingdom** and judges the people.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4410, H4437, H4438, H4467, H4468, H4474, H4475, G09320

(Go back to: [Amos 7:13](#))

know, knowledge, unknown, distinguish

Definition:

The term “know” and “knowledge” means generally to understand something or someone. It can also mean to be aware of a fact or to be familiar with a person. The expression “to make known” means to tell information.

- The term “knowledge” refers to information that people know. It can apply to knowing physical concepts or abstract concepts.
- To “know about” God means to understand facts about him because of what he has revealed to us.
- To “know” God means to have a relationship with him. This also applies to knowing people.
- To know God’s will means to be aware of what he has commanded, or to understand what he wants a person to do.
- To “know the Law” means to be aware of what God has commanded or to understand what God has instructed in the laws he gave to Moses.
- Sometimes “knowledge” is used as a synonym for “wisdom,” which includes living in a way that is pleasing to God.
- The “knowledge of God” is sometimes used as a synonym for the “fear of Yahweh.”
- When used of a man and a woman to “know” is often an euphemism that refers to having sexual intercourse.

Translation Suggestions

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “know” could include “understand” or “be familiar with” or “be aware of” or “be acquainted with” or “be in relationship with.”
- In the context of understanding the difference between two things, the term is usually translated as “distinguish.” When used in this way, the term is often followed by the preposition “between.”
- Some languages have two different words for “know,” one for knowing facts and one for knowing a person and having a relationship with him.
- The term “make known” could be translated as “cause people to know” or “reveal” or “tell about” or “explain.”
- To “know about” something could be translated as “be aware of” or “be familiar with.”
- The expression “know how to” means to understand the process or method of getting something done. It could also be translated as “be able to” or “have the skill to.”
- The term “knowledge” could also be translated as “what is known” or “wisdom” or “understanding,” depending on the context.

(See also: [law](#), reveal, understand, wise)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 2:12-13
- 1 Samuel 17:46
- 2 Corinthians 2:15
- 2 Peter 1:3-4
- Deuteronomy 4:39-40
- Genesis 19:5
- Luke 1:77

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1843, H1844, H1847, H1875, H3045, H3046, H4093, H4486, H5046, H5234, H5475, H5869, G00500, G00560, G10970, G11070, G11080, G14920, G19210, G19220, G19870, G24670, G25890, G42670, G48940

(Go back to: [Amos 3:2](#); [3:10](#); [4:3](#); [5:12](#); [5:16](#))

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: [Introduction to Amos](#); [Amos 2:4](#))

life, live, living, alive

Definition:

The term “life” refers to being physically alive as opposed to being physically dead.

1. Physical life

- A “life” can also refer to an individual person as in “a life was saved”.
- Sometimes the word “life” refers to the experience of living as in, “his life was enjoyable.”
- It can also refer to a person’s lifespan, as in the expression, “the end of his life.”
- The term “living” may refer to being physically alive, as in “my mother is still living.” It may also refer to dwelling somewhere as in, “they were living in the city.”
- In the Bible, the concept of “life” is often contrasted with the concept of “death.”

2. Eternal life

- A person has eternal life when he believes in Jesus. God gives that person a transformed life with the Holy Spirit living in him.
- The opposite of eternal life is eternal death, which means being separated from God and experiencing eternal punishment.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, “life” can be translated as “existence” or “person” or “soul” or “being” or “experience.”
- The term “live” could be translated by “dwell” or “reside” or “exist.”
- The expression “end of his life” could be translated as “when he stopped living.”
- The expression “spared their lives” could be translated as “allowed them to live” or “did not kill them.”
- The expression “they risked their lives” could be translated as “they put themselves in danger” or “they did something that could have killed them.”
- When the Bible text talks about eternal life, the term “life” could be translated in the following ways: “eternal life” or “God making us alive in our spirits” or “new life by God’s Spirit” or “being made alive in our inner self.”
- Depending on the context, the expression “give life” could also be translated as “cause to live” or “give eternal life” or “cause to live eternally.”

(See also: [death](#), everlasting)

Bible References:

- 2 Peter 1:3
- Acts 10:42
- Genesis 2:7
- Genesis 7:22
- Hebrews 10:20
- Jeremiah 44:2
- John 1:4
- Judges 2:18
- Luke 12:23
- Matthew 7:14

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:10** So God took some dirt, formed it into a man, and breathed **life** into him.
- **3:1** After a long time, many people were *_living_* in the world.
- **8:13** When Joseph's brothers returned home and told their father, Jacob, that Joseph was still **alive**, he was very happy.
- **17:9** However, toward the end of his [David's] **life** he sinned terribly before God.
- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal **life**?"
- **35:5** Jesus replied, "I am the Resurrection and the **Life**."
- **44:5** "You are the ones who told the Roman governor to kill Jesus. You killed the author of **life**, but God raised him from the dead."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1934, H2416, H2417, H2421, H2425, H5315, G01980, G02220, G02270, G08060, G05900

(Go back to: [Amos 2:14](#); [2:15](#); [5:4](#); [5:6](#); [5:14](#); [8:14](#))

lion, lioness

Definition:

A lion is a large, cat-like, that has animal, with powerful teeth and claws for killing and tearing apart its prey.

- Lions have powerful bodies and great speed to catch their prey. Their fur is short and golden-brown.
- Male lions have a mane of hair that encircles their heads.
- Lions kill other animals to eat them and can be dangerous to human beings.
- When King David was a boy, he killed lions that tried to attack the sheep he was caring for.
- Samson also killed a lion, with his bare hands.

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

(See also: [David](#), leopard, Samson, [sheep](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:22-23
- 1 Kings 7:29
- Proverbs 19:12
- Psalms 17:12
- Revelation 5:5

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0738, H0739, H0744, H3715, H3833, H3918, H7826, H7830, G30230

(Go back to: [Amos 3:4](#); [3:8](#))

locust

Facts:

The term “locust” refers to a type of large, flying grasshopper that sometimes flies with many other of its kind in a very destructive swarm that eats all vegetation.

- Locusts and other grasshoppers are large, straight-winged insects with long, jointed back legs that give them the ability to jump a long distance way.
- In the Old Testament, swarming locusts were referred to figuratively as a symbol or picture of the overwhelming devastation that would come as a result of Israel's disobedience.
- God sent locusts as one of the ten plagues against the Egyptians.
- The New Testament says that locusts were a main source of food for John the Baptist while he was living in the desert.

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

(See also: [captive](#), [Egypt](#), [Israel](#), John (the Baptist), plague)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 6:28
- Deuteronomy 28:38-39
- Exodus 10:3-4
- Mark 1:6
- Proverbs 30:27-28

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0697, H1357, H1462, H1501, H2284, H3218, H5556, H6767, G02000

(Go back to: [Amos 4:9](#))

lord, Lord, master, sir

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “lord” generally refers to someone who has ownership or authority over other people. In the Bible, however, the term is used to address many different kinds of people, including God.

- This word is sometimes translated as “master” when addressing Jesus or when referring to someone who owns slaves.
- Some English versions translate this as “sir” in contexts where someone is politely addressing someone of higher status.

When “Lord” is capitalized, it is a title that refers to God. (Note, however, that when it is used as a form of addressing someone or it occurs at the beginning of a sentence it may be capitalized and have the meaning of “sir” or “master.”)

- In the Old Testament, this term is also used in expressions such as “Lord God Almighty” or “Lord Yahweh” or “Yahweh our Lord.”
- In the New Testament, the apostles used this term in expressions such as “Lord Jesus” and “Lord Jesus Christ,” which communicate that Jesus is God.
- The term “Lord” in the New Testament is also used alone as a direct reference to God, especially in quotations from the Old Testament. For example, the Old Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of Yahweh” and the New Testament text has “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.”
- In the ULT and UST, the title “Lord” is only used to translate the actual Hebrew and Greek words that mean “Lord.” It is never used as a translation of God’s name (Yahweh), as is done in many translations.
- Some languages translate “Lord” as “Master” or “Ruler” or some other term that communicates ownership or supreme rule.
- In the appropriate contexts, many translations capitalize the first letter of this term to make it clear to the reader that this is a title referring to God.
- For places in the New Testament where there is a quote from the Old Testament, the term “Lord God” could be used to make it clear that this is a reference to God.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term can be translated with the equivalent of “master” when it refers to a person who owns slaves. It can also be used by a servant to address the person he works for.
- When it refers to Jesus, if the context shows that the speaker sees him as a religious teacher, it can be translated with a respectful address for a religious teacher, such as “master.”
- If the person addressing Jesus does not know him, “lord” could be translated with a respectful form of address such as “sir.” This translation would also be used for other contexts in which a polite form of address to a man is called for.
- When referring to God the Father or to Jesus, this term is considered a title, written as “Lord” (capitalized) in English.

(See also: [God](#), [Jesus](#), [ruler](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 39:2
- Joshua 3:9-11
- Psalms 86:15-17
- Jeremiah 27:4
- Lamentations 2:2

- Ezekiel 18:29
- Daniel 9:9
- Daniel 9:17-19
- Malachi 3:1
- Matthew 7:21-23
- Luke 1:30-33
- Luke 16:13
- Romans 6:23
- Ephesians 6:9
- Philippians 2:9-11
- Colossians 3:23
- Hebrews 12:14
- James 2:1
- 1 Peter 1:3
- Jude 1:5
- Revelation 15:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **25:5** But Jesus replied to Satan by quoting from the Scriptures. He said, "In God's word, he commands his people, 'Do not test the **Lord** your God.'"
- **25:7** Jesus replied, "Get away from me, Satan! In God's word he commands his people, 'Worship only the **Lord** your God and only serve him.'"
- **26:3** This is the year of the **Lord's** favor.
- **27:2** The law expert replied that God's law says, "Love the **Lord** your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind."
- **31:5** Then Peter said to Jesus, "**Master**, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water"
- **43:9** "But know for certain that God has caused Jesus to become both **Lord** and Messiah!"
- **47:3** By means of this demon she predicted the future for people, she made a lot of money for her **masters** as a fortuneteller.
- **47:11** Paul answered, "Believe in Jesus, the **Master**, and you and your family will be saved."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0113, H0136, H1167, H1376, H4756, H7980, H8323, G02030, G06340, G09620, G12030, G29620

(Go back to: [Amos 1:8](#); [3:7](#); [3:8](#); [3:11](#); [3:13](#); [4:2](#); [4:5](#); [5:3](#); [5:16](#); [6:8](#); [7:1](#); [7:2](#); [7:4](#); [7:5](#); [7:6](#); [7:7](#); [7:8](#); [8:1](#); [8:3](#); [8:9](#); [8:11](#); [9:1](#); [9:8](#))

love, beloved

Definition:

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

The kind of love that comes from God is focused on the good of others even when it doesn't benefit oneself. This kind of love cares for others, no matter what they do. God himself is love and is the source of true love.

- Jesus showed this kind of love by sacrificing his life in order to rescue us from sin and death. He also taught his followers to love others sacrificially.
- When people love others with this kind of love, they act in ways that show they are thinking of what will cause the others to thrive. This kind of love especially includes forgiving others.
- In the ULT, the word "love" refers to this kind of sacrificial love, unless a Translation Note indicates a different meaning.

Another word in the New Testament refers to brotherly love, or love for a friend or family member.

- This term refers to natural human love between friends or relatives.
- The term can also be used in such contexts as, "They love to sit in the most important seats at a banquet." This means that they "like very much" or "greatly desire" to do that.

The word "love" can also refer to romantic love between a man and a woman.

Translation Suggestions:

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

(See also: [covenant](#), [death](#), [sacrifice](#), [save](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 13:7
- 1 John 3:2
- 1 Thessalonians 4:10
- Galatians 5:23
- Genesis 29:18
- Isaiah 56:6
- Jeremiah 2:2

- John 3:16
- Matthew 10:37
- Nehemiah 9:32-34
- Philippians 1:9
- Song of Songs 1:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:2** The law expert replied that God's law says, "**Love** the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind. And **love** your neighbor as yourself."
- **33:8** "The thorny ground is a person who hears God's word, but, as time passes, the cares, riches, and pleasures of life choke out his **love** for God."
- **36:5** As Peter was talking, a bright cloud came down on top of them and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son whom I **love**."
- **39:10** "Everyone who **loves** the truth listens to me."
- **47:1** She (Lydia) **loved** and worshiped God.
- **48:1** When God created the world, everything was perfect. There was no sin. Adam and Eve **loved** each other, and they **loved** God.
- **49:3** He (Jesus) taught that you need to **love** other people the same way you love yourself.
- **49:4** He (Jesus) also taught that you need to **love** God more than you **love** anything else, including your wealth.
- **49:7** Jesus taught that God **loves** sinners very much.
- **49:9** But God **loved** everyone in the world so much that he gave his only Son so that whoever believes in Jesus will not be punished for his sins, but will live with God forever.
- **49:13** God **loves** you and wants you to believe in Jesus so he can have a close relationship with you.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0157, H0158, H0159, H0160, H2245, H2617, H2836, H3039, H4261, H5689, H5690, H5691, H7355, H7356, H7453, H7474, G00250, G00260, G53600, G53610, G53620, G53630, G53650, G53670, G53680, G53690, G53770, G53810, G53820, G53830, G53880

(Go back to: [Amos 4:5](#); [5:15](#))

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: [Amos 9 General Notes](#))

might, mighty, mighty works

Definition:

The terms “mighty” and “might” refer to having great strength or power.

- Often the word “might” is another word for “strength.” When talking about God, it can mean “power.”
- The phrase “mighty men” often refers to men who are courageous and victorious in battle. David’s band of faithful men who helped protect and defend him were often called “mighty men.”
- God is also referred to as the “mighty one.”
- The phrase “mighty works” usually refers to the amazing things God does, especially miracles.
- This term is related to the term “almighty,” which is a common description for God, meaning that he has complete power.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “mighty” could be translated as “powerful” or “amazing” or “very strong.”
- The phrase “his might” could be translated as “his strength” or “his power.”
- In Acts 7, Moses is described as a man who was “mighty in word and deed.” This could be translated as “Moses spoke powerful words from God and did miraculous things” or “Moses spoke God’s word powerfully and did many amazing things.”
- Depending on the context, “mighty works” could be translated as “amazing things that God does” or “miracles” or “God doing things with power.”
- The term “might” could also be translated as “power” or “great strength.”
- Do not confuse this term with the English word that is used to express a possibility, as in “It might rain.”

(See also: Almighty, miracle, power, [strength](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 7:22
- Genesis 6:4
- Mark 9:38-39
- Matthew 11:23

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0046, H0047, H0117, H0202, H0386, H0410, H0430, H0533, H0650, H1219, H1368, H1369, H1396, H1397, H1419, H2220, H2389, H2428, H3201, H3524, H3581, H3966, H4101, H5794, H5797, H6099, H6105, H6108, H6184, H7227, H7580, H8623, H8624, G14110, G14150, G14980, G24780, G24790, G29000, G29040, G31670, G31730

(Go back to: [Amos 5:9](#))

Moab, Moabite

Facts:

The term “Moab” refers to a people group that lived to the east of the Salt Sea. The book of Genesis describes this people group as the descendents of a man named “Moab,” who was the son of Lot’s elder daughter.

- In the book of Ruth, Elimelek and his family went to live in Moab because of the famine around Bethlehem.
- Ruth is called a “Moabite woman” because she was born in the country of Moab and was from that people group.

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

(See also: Bethlehem, [Judea](#), Lot, Ruth, Salt Sea)

Bible References:

- Genesis 19:37
- Genesis 36:34-36
- Ruth 1:1-2
- Ruth 1:22

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4124, H4125

(Go back to: [Amos 2:1](#); [2:2](#))

mourn, mourner, weeping

Facts:

The terms “mourn” and “mourning” refer to expressing deep grief, usually in response to the death of someone.

- In many cultures, mourning includes specific outward behaviors that show this sadness and grief.
- The Israelites and other people groups in ancient times expressed mourning through loud wailing and lamenting. They also wore rough clothing made of sackcloth and put ashes on themselves.
- Hired mourners, usually women, would loudly weep and wail from the time of death until well after the body was put in the tomb.
- The typical period of mourning was seven days, but could last as long as thirty days (as for Moses and Aaron) or seventy days (as for Jacob).
- The Bible also uses the term figuratively to talk about “mourning” because of sin. This refers to feeling deeply grieved because sin hurts God and people.

(See also: [sackcloth](#), [sin](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 15:34-35
- 2 Samuel 1:11
- Genesis 23:2
- Luke 7:31-32
- Matthew 11:17

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0056, H0057, H0060, H0205, H0578, H0584, H0585, H1058, H1065, H1068, H1671, H1897, H1899, H4553, H4798, H5092, H5098, H5110, H5594, H6937, H6941, H8386, G23540, G28750, G36020, G39960, G39970

(Go back to: [Amos 1:2](#); [8:8](#); [9:5](#))

name

Definition:

The term “name” refers to the word by which a specific person or thing is called. In the Bible, however, the term “name” is used in several different ways to refer to several different concepts.

- In some contexts, “name” could refer to a person’s reputation, as in “let us make a name for ourselves.”
- The term “name” could also refer to the memory of something. For example, “cut off the names of the idols” means to destroy those idols so that they are no longer remembered or worshiped.
- Speaking “in the name of God” meant speaking with his power and authority, or as his representative.
- The “name” of someone could refer to the entire person, as in “there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.” (See: [metonymy](#))

Translation Suggestions:

- An expression like “his good name” could be translated as “his good reputation.”
- Doing something “in the name of” could be translated as “with the authority of” or “with the permission of” or “as the representative of” that person.
- The expression “make a name for ourselves” could be translated “cause many people to know about us” or “make people think we are very important.”
- The expression “call his name” could be translated as “name him” or “give him the name.”
- The expression “those who love your name” could be translated as “those who love you.”
- The expression “cut off the names of idols” could be translated as “get rid of pagan idols so that they are not even remembered” or “cause people to stop worshiping false gods” or “completely destroy all idols so that people no longer even think about them.”

(See also: [call](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:12
- 2 Timothy 2:19
- Acts 4:7
- Acts 4:12
- Acts 9:27
- Genesis 12:2
- Genesis 35:10
- Matthew 18:5

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H5344, H7121, H7761, H8034, H8036, G25640, G36860, G36870, G51220

(Go back to: [Amos 2:7](#); [4:13](#); [5:8](#); [5:27](#); [6:10](#); [9:6](#); [9:12](#))

nation

Definition:

A nation is a large group of people ruled by some form of government. The people of a nation often have the same ancestors and share a common ethnicity.

- A “nation” usually has a well-defined culture and territorial boundaries.
- In the Bible, a “nation” could be a country (like Egypt or Ethiopia), but often it is more general and refers to a people group, especially when used in the plural. It is important to check the context.
- Nations in the Bible included the Israelites, the Philistines, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Canaanites, the Romans, and the Greeks, among many others.
- Sometimes the word “nation” was used figuratively to refer to the ancestor of a certain people group, as when Rebekah was told by God that her unborn sons were “nations” that would fight against each other. This could be translated as “the founders of two nations” or the “ancestors of two people groups.”
- The word translated as “nation” was also sometimes used to refer to “Gentiles” or to people who do not worship Yahweh. The context usually makes the meaning clear.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the word “nation” could also be translated as “people group” or “people” or “country.”
- If a language has a term for “nation” that is distinct from these other terms, then that term can be used wherever it occurs in the Bible text, as long as it is natural and accurate in each context.
- The plural term “nations” can often be translated as “people groups.”
- In certain contexts, this term could also be translated as “Gentiles” or “nonJews.”

(See also: Assyria, Babylon, Canaan, Gentile, Greek, [people group](#), [Philistines](#), Rome)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 14:15-17
- 2 Chronicles 15:6
- 2 Kings 17:11-12
- Acts 2:5
- Acts 13:19
- Acts 17:26
- Acts 26:4
- Daniel 3:4
- Genesis 10:2-5
- Genesis 27:29
- Genesis 35:11
- Genesis 49:10
- Luke 7:5
- Mark 13:7-8
- Matthew 21:43
- Romans 4:16-17

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0523, H0524, H0776, H1471, H3816, H4940, H5971, G02460, G10740, G10850, G14840

(Go back to: [Amos 6:1](#); [6:14](#); [9:9](#); [9:12](#))

new moon

Definition:

The term “new moon” refers to the moon when it looks like a small, crescent-shaped sliver of light. This is the beginning phase of the moon as it moves in its orbit around the planet Earth at sunset. It also refers to the first day a new moon should be visible after the moon has been dark for a few days.

- In ancient times, new moons marked the beginnings of certain time periods, such as months.
- The Israelites celebrated a new moon festival that was marked by the blowing of a ram’s horn.
- The Bible also refers to this time as the “beginning of the month.”

(See also: month, [earth](#), festival, horn, [sheep](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 23:31
- 1 Samuel 20:5
- 2 Kings 4:23-24
- Ezekiel 45:16-17
- Isaiah 1:12-13

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2320, G33760, G35610

(Go back to: [Amos 8:5](#))

oath, swear, swearing, swear by

Definition:

The term "oath" in the Bible refers to a formal promise, usually made in a legal or religious context, in which the person making the oath accepts some kind of accountability or punishment if he does not fulfill his promise. In the Bible, the term "swear" means to make an oath.

- In a court of law, a witness often gives an oath to promise that whatever he says will be true and factual.
- In modern times, one meaning of the word "swear" is to use foul or vulgar language. This is never its meaning in the Bible.
- The term "swear by" means to use the name of something or someone as the basis or power on which the oath is made.
- Abraham and Abimelech swore an oath when they made a covenant together concerning the use of a well.
- Abraham told his servant to swear (formally promise) that he would find Isaac a wife from among Abraham's relatives.
- God also made oaths in which he made promises to his people.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, "an oath" could also be translated as "a pledge" or "a solemn promise."
- To "swear" could be translated as to "formally promise" or to "pledge" or to "commit to do something."
- Other ways to translate "swear by my name" could include "make a promise using my name to confirm it."
- To "swear by heaven and earth" could be translated as to, "promise to do something, stating that heaven and earth will confirm it."
- Make sure the translation of "swear" or "oath" does not refer to cursing. In the Bible it does not have that meaning.

(See also: Abimelech, [covenant](#), [vow](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 21:23
- Genesis 24:3
- Genesis 31:51-53
- Genesis 47:31
- Luke 1:73
- Mark 6:26
- Matthew 5:36
- Matthew 14:6-7
- Matthew 26:72

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0422, H0423, H3027, H5375, H7621, H7650, G03320, G36600, G37270, G37280

(Go back to: [Amos 4:2](#); [6:8](#); [8:7](#))

olive

Definition:

The olive is the small, oval fruit from an olive tree, which is mostly grown in the regions surrounding the Mediterranean Sea.

- Olive trees are a type of large evergreen shrub with tiny white flowers. They grow best in hot weather and can survive well with little water.
- The olive tree's fruit starts out green and changes to black as they ripen. Olives were useful for food and for the oil that could be extracted from them.
- Olive oil was used for cooking in lamps and for religious ceremonies.
- In the Bible, olive trees and branches are sometimes used figuratively to refer to people.

(See also: lamp, the sea, Mount of Olives)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 27:28-29
- Deuteronomy 6:10-12
- Exodus 23:10-11
- Genesis 8:11
- James 3:12
- Luke 16:6
- Psalms 52:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2132, H3323, H8081, G00650, G16360, G16370, G25650

(Go back to: [Amos 4:9](#); [6:6](#))

people of God

Definition:

The concept of the “people of God” in the Bible refers to people with whom God has established a covenant relationship.

- In the Old Testament, the phrase “people of God” refers to the nation of Israel. The nation of Israel was chosen by God and set apart from the other nations of the world in order to serve and obey him.
- In the New Testament, the phrase “people of God” refers to the “Church,” meaning everyone who believes in Jesus. This includes both Jews and Gentiles. In the New Testament, sometimes this group of people is called the “sons of God” or “children of God.”
- When God uses the phrase “my people,” he is referring to people who have a covenant relationship with him. God’s people are chosen by him, and he wants them to live in a way that is pleasing to him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people of God” could be translated as “God’s people” or “the people who worship God” or “people who serve God” or “people who belong to God.”
- When God says “my people” other ways to translate it could include “the people I have chosen” or “the people who worship me” or “the people who belong to me.”
- Similarly, “your people” could be translated as “the people who belong to you” or “the people you chose to belong to you.”
- Also “his people” could be translated as “the people who belong to him” or “the people God chose to belong to himself.”

(See also: [Israel](#), [people group](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:2
- Acts 7:34
- Acts 7:51-53
- Acts 10:36-38
- Daniel 9:24-25
- Isaiah 2:5-6
- Jeremiah 6:20-22
- Joel 3:16-17
- Micah 6:3-5
- Revelation 13:7-8

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0430, H5971, G23160, G29920

(Go back to: [Amos 4 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

people, people group

Definition:

The terms “people” and “people group” refer to some group of people that shares a common language and culture. The term “the people” often refers to a gathering of people in a certain place or at a specific event.

- In Bible times, the members of a people group usually had the same ancestors and lived together in a particular country or area of land.
- Depending on the context, the term “people” can refer to a “people group” or “family” or “relatives” or “army.”
- In plural form, the term “peoples” often refers to all people groups on the earth. Sometimes it refers more specifically to people who are not Israelites or who do not serve Yahweh. In some English Bible translations, the term “nations” is also used in this way.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “people group” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “large family group” or “clan” or “ethnic group.”
- A phrase such as “my people” could be translated as “my relatives” or “my fellow Israelites” or “my family” or “my people group,” depending on the context.
- The expression “scatter you among the peoples” could also be translated as “cause you to go live with many different people groups” or “cause you to separate from each other and go live in many different regions of the world.”
- The term “the peoples” or “the people” could also be translated as “the people in the world” or “people groups,” depending on the context.
- The phrase “the people of” could be translated as “the people living in” or “the people descended from” or “the family of,” depending on whether it is followed by the name of a place or a person.
- “All the peoples of the earth” could be translated as “everyone living on earth” or “every person in the world” or “all people.”
- The phrase “a people” could also be translated as “a group of people” or “certain people” or “a community of people” or “a family of people.”

(See also: descendant, [nation](#), [tribe](#), world)

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 8:51-53
- 1 Samuel 8:7
- Deuteronomy 28:9
- Genesis 49:16
- Ruth 1:16

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **14:2** God had promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give the Promised Land to their descendants, but now there were many **people groups** living there.
- **21:2** God promised Abraham that through him all **people groups** of the world would receive a blessing. This blessing would be that the Messiah would come sometime in the future and provide the way of salvation for people from all the **people groups** of the world.

- **42:8** "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all **people groups** everywhere."
- **42:10** "So go, make disciples of all **people groups** by baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and by teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."
- **48:11** Because of this New Covenant, anyone from any **people group** can become part of God's people by believing in Jesus.
- **50:3** He (Jesus) said, "Go and make disciples of all **people groups!**" and, "The fields are ripe for harvest!"

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0249, H0523, H0524, H0776, H1121, H1471, H3816, H5712, H5971, H5972, H6153, G10740, G10850, G12180, G14840, G25600, G29920, G37930

(Go back to: [Amos 1:5](#); [3:6](#); [7:8](#); [7:15](#); [8:2](#); [9:10](#); [9:14](#))

persecute

Definition:

The terms “persecute” and “persecution” refer to continually treating a person or a certain group of people in a harsh way that causes harm to them.

- Persecution can be against one person or many people and usually involves repeated, persistent attacks.
- The Israelites were persecuted by many different people groups Who attacked them, captured them, and stole things from them.
- People often persecute other people who have different religious beliefs or who are weaker.
- The Jewish religious leaders persecuted Jesus because they did not like what he was teaching.
- After Jesus went back to heaven, the Jewish religious leaders and the Roman government persecuted his followers.
- The term “persecute” could also be translated as “keep oppressing” or “treat harshly” or “continually mistreat.”
- Ways to translate “persecution” could include, “harsh mistreatment” or “oppression” or “persistent hurtful treatment”

(See also: Christian, church, oppress, Rome)

Bible References:

- Acts 7:52
- Acts 13:50
- Galatians 1:13-14
- John 5:16-18
- Mark 10:30
- Matthew 5:10
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 10:22
- Matthew 13:20-21
- Philippians 3:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **33:7** “The rocky ground is a person who hears God’s word and accepts it with joy. But when he experiences hardship or **persecution**, he falls away.”
- **45:6** That day many people in Jerusalem started **persecuting** the followers of Jesus, so the believers fled to other places.
- **46:2** Saul heard someone say, “Saul! Saul! Why do you **persecute** me?” Saul asked, “Who are you, Master?” Jesus replied to him, “I am Jesus. You are **persecuting** me!”
- **46:4** But Ananias said, “Master, I have heard how this man has **persecuted** the believers.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1814, H7291, H7852, G13750, G13760, G13770, G15590, G23470

(Go back to: [Amos 1:11](#))

Philistines

Facts:

The Philistines were a people group who occupied a region known as Philistia along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Their name means "people of the sea."

- There were five main Philistine cities: Ashdod, Ashkelon, Ekron, Gath, and Gaza.
- The city of Ashdod was in the northern part of Philistia, and the city of Gaza was in the southern part.
- The Philistines are probably best known for the many years they were at war against the Israelites.
- The judge Samson was a famous warrior against the Philistines, using supernatural strength from God.
- King David often led battles against the Philistines, including the time as a youth when he defeated the Philistine warrior, Goliath.

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

(See also: [Ashdod](#), [Ashkelon](#), [David](#), Ekron, Gath, Gaza, Goliath, Salt Sea)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:9-11
- 1 Samuel 13:4
- 2 Chronicles 9:25-26
- Genesis 10:11-14
- Psalm 56:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6429, H6430

(Go back to: [Amos 1:8](#); [6:2](#))

plow, plowed, plowers, plowman, plowshares, unplowed

Definition:

A “plow” is a farm tool that is used for breaking up soil to prepare a field for planting.

- Plows have sharp, pointed prongs that dig into the soil. They usually have handles that the farmer uses to guide the plow.
- In Bible times, plows were usually pulled by a pair of oxen or other work animals.
- Most plows were made of hard wood, except for the sharp points which were made of a metal, such as bronze or iron.

(See also: bronze, ox)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 8:10-12
- Deuteronomy 21:4
- Luke 9:62
- Luke 17:7
- Psalm 141:5-7

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0406, H0855, H2758, H2790, H5215, H5647, H5656, H5674, H6213, H6398, G07220, G07230

(Go back to: [Amos 5:16](#))

possess, possessed, possession, dispossess

Facts:

The terms “possess” and “possession” usually refer to owning something. They can also mean to gain control over something or occupy an area of land.

- In the Old Testament, this term is often used in the context of “possessing” or “taking possession of” an area of land.
- When Yahweh commanded the Israelites to “possess” the land of Canaan, it meant that they should go into the land and live there. This involved first conquering the Canaanite peoples who were living on that land.
- Yahweh told the Israelites that he had given them the land of Canaan as “their possession.” This could also be translated as “their rightful place to live.”
- The people of Israel were also called Yahweh’s “special possession.” This means that they belonged to him as his people whom he had specifically called to worship and serve him.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “possess” could also be translated as “own” or “have” or “have charge over.”
- The phrase “take possession of” could be translated as “take control of” or “occupy” or “live on,” depending on the context.
- When referring to things that people own, “possessions” could be translated as “belongings” or “property” or “owned things” or “things they owned.”
- When Yahweh calls the Israelites, “my special possession” this could also be translated as “my special people” or “people who belong to me” or “my people whom I love and rule.”
- The sentence, “they will become their possession” when referring to land, means “they will occupy the land” or “the land will belong to them.”
- The expression, “found in his possession” could be translated as “that he was holding” or “that he had with him.”
- The phrase “as your possession” could also be translated as “as something that belongs to you” or “as a place where your people will live.”
- The phrase, “in his possession” could be translated as “that he owned” or “which belonged to him.”

(See also: Canaan, worship, inherit)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 6:70
- 1 Kings 9:17-19
- Acts 2:45
- Deuteronomy 4:5-6
- Genesis 31:36-37
- Matthew 13:44

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0270, H0272, H0834, H2505, H2631, H3027, H3423, H3424, H3425, H3426, H4180, H4181, H4672, H4735, H4736, H5157, H5159, H5459, H7069, G11390, G21920, G26970, G27220, G29320, G29330, G29350, G40470, G52240, G55640

(Go back to: [Amos 2:10](#))

pray, prayer

Definition:

The terms “pray” and “prayer” refer to talking with God. These terms are also used to refer to people trying to talk to a false god.

- People can pray silently, talking to God with their thoughts, or they can pray aloud, speaking to God with their voice. Sometimes prayers are written down, such as when David wrote his prayers in the Book of Psalms.
- Prayer can include asking God for mercy, for help with a problem, and for wisdom in making decisions.
- Often people ask God to heal people who are sick or who need his help in other ways.
- People also thank and praise God when they are praying to him.
- Praying includes confessing our sins to God and asking him to forgive us.
- Talking to God is sometimes called “communing” with him as our spirit communicates with his spirit, sharing our emotions and enjoying his presence.
- This term could be translated as “talking to God” or “communicating with God.” The translation of this term should be able to include praying that is silent.

(See also: false god, [forgive](#), praise)

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 3:9
- Acts 8:24
- Acts 14:26
- Colossians 4:4
- John 17:9
- Luke 11:1
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 14:22-24

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **6:5** Isaac **prayed** for Rebekah, and God allowed her to get pregnant with twins.
- **13:12** But Moses **prayed** for them, and God listened to his **prayer** and did not destroy them.
- **19:8** Then the prophets of Baal **prayed** to Baal, “Hear us, O Baal!”
- **21:7** Priests also **prayed** to God for the people.
- **38:11** Jesus told his disciples to **pray** that they would not enter into temptation.
- **43:13** The disciples continually listened to the teaching of the apostles, spent time together, ate together, and **prayed** with each other.
- **49:18** God tells you to **pray**, to study his word, to worship him with other Christians, and to tell others what he has done for you.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0577, H1156, H2470, H3863, H3908, H4994, H6279, H6293, H6419, H6739, H7592, H7878, H7879, H7881, H8034, H8605, G01540, G11620, G11890, G17830, G20650, G21710, G21720, G38700, G43350, G43360

(Go back to: [Amos 2:13](#); [4:7](#); [5:1](#); [6:8](#); [7:14](#); [9:9](#))

priest, priesthood

Definition:

In the Bible, a priest was someone who was chosen to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of God's people. The "priesthood" was the name for the office or condition of being a priest.

- In the Old Testament, God chose Aaron and his descendants to be his priests for the people of Israel.
- The "priesthood" was a right and a responsibility that was passed down from father to son in the Levite clan.
- The Israelite priests had the responsibility of offering the people's sacrifices to God, along with other duties in the temple.
- Priests also offered regular prayers to God on behalf of his people and performed other religious rites.
- The priests pronounced formal blessings on people and taught them God's laws.
- In Jesus' time, there were different levels of priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.
- Jesus is our "great high priest" who intercedes for us in God's presence. He offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This means that the sacrifices made by human priests are no longer needed.
- In the New Testament, every believer in Jesus is called a "priest" who can come directly to God in prayer to intercede for himself and other people.
- In ancient times, there were also pagan priests who presented offerings to false gods such as Baal.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "priest" could be translated as "sacrifice person" or "God's intermediary" or "sacrificial mediator" or "person God appoints to represent him."
- The translation of "priest" should be different from the translation of "mediator."
- Some translations may prefer to always say something like "Israelite priest" or "Jewish priest" or "Yahweh's priest" or "priest of Baal" to make it clear that this does not refer to a modern-day type of priest.
- The term used to translate "priest" should be different from the terms for "chief priest" and "high priest" and "Levite" and "prophet."

(See also: Aaron, high priest, mediator, [sacrifice](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 6:41
- Genesis 14:17-18
- Genesis 47:22
- John 1:19-21
- Luke 10:31
- Mark 1:44
- Mark 2:25-26
- Matthew 8:4
- Matthew 12:4
- Micah 3:9-11
- Nehemiah 10:28-29
- Nehemiah 10:34-36
- Revelation 1:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:7** "Melchizedek, the **priest** of God Most High"

- **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. A **priest** would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight. God chose Moses' brother, Aaron, and Aaron's descendants to be his **priests**.
- **19:7** So the **priests** of Baal prepared a sacrifice but did not light the fire.
- **21:7** An Israelite **priest** was someone who made sacrifices to God on behalf of the people as a substitute for the punishment of their sins. **Priests** also prayed to God for the people.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3547, H3548, H3549, H3550, G07480, G07490, G24050, G24060, G24070, G24090, G24200

(Go back to: [Amos 7:10](#))

prince, princess, governors, provincial governors, officials, noblemen, nobility

Definition:

A "prince" is the son of a king. A "princess" is a daughter of a king.

- The term "prince" is often used figuratively to refer to a leader, ruler, or other powerful person.
- Because of Abraham's wealth and importance, he was referred to as a "prince" by the Hittites he was living among.
- In the book of Daniel, the term "prince" is used in the expressions "prince of Persia" and "prince of Greece," which in those contexts probably refer to powerful evil spirits who had authority over those regions.
- The archangel Michael is also referred to as a "prince" in the book of Daniel.
- Sometimes in the Bible Satan is referred to as "the prince of this world."
- Jesus is called the "Prince of Peace" and the "Prince of Life."
- In Acts 2:36, Jesus is referred to as "Lord and Christ" and in Acts 5:31 he is referred to as "Prince and Savior," showing the parallel meaning of "Lord" and "Prince."

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate "prince" could include, "king's son" or "ruler" or "leader" or "chieftain" or "captain."
- When referring to angels, this could also be translated as "spirit ruler" or "leading angel."
- When referring to Satan or other evil spirits, this term could also be translated as "evil spirit ruler" or "powerful spirit leader" or "ruling spirit," depending on the context.

(See also: [angel](#), [authority](#), [Christ](#), [demon](#), [lord](#), [power](#), [ruler](#), [Satan](#), [Savior](#), [spirit](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 5:29-32
- Genesis 12:15
- Genesis 49:26
- Luke 1:52

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0001, H0117, H0324, H2831, H3548, H4502, H5057, H5081, H5139, H5257, H5387, H5633, H5993, H6579, H7261, H7333, H7786, H8269, H8282, H8323, G07470, G07580, G14130, G31750

(Go back to: [Amos 1:15](#); [2:3](#))

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: [Amos 2:12](#); [Notes](#); [3:7](#); [Notes](#); [7:14](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#))

prostitute, harlot, whored

Definition:

The terms “prostitute” and “harlot” both refer to a person who performs sexual acts for money or for religious rites. Prostitutes or harlots were usually female, but some were male.

- In the Bible, the word “prostitute” is sometimes used figuratively to refer to a person who worships false gods or who practices witchcraft.
- The expression “play the harlot” means to act like a harlot by being sexually immoral. This expression is also used in the Bible to refer to a person who worships idols.
- To “prostitute oneself” to something means to be sexually immoral or when used figuratively, to be unfaithful to God by worshipping false gods.
- In ancient times, some pagan temples used male and female prostitutes as part of their rituals.
- This term could be translated by the word or phrase that is used in the project language to refer to a prostitute. Some languages may have a euphemistic term that is used for this. (See: [euphemism](#))

(See also: adultery, false god, sexual immorality, false god)

Bible References:

- Genesis 34:31
- Genesis 38:21
- Luke 15:30
- Matthew 21:31

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2154, H2181, H2183, H2185, H6945, H6948, H8457, G42040

(Go back to: [Amos 7:17](#))

Rabbah

Definition:

Rabbah was the most important city of the Ammonite people.

- In battles against the Ammonites, the Israelites often attacked Rabbah.
- Israel's King David captured Rabbah as one of his last conquests.
- The modern-day city Amman Jordan is now where Rabbah used to be located.

(See also: Ammon, [David](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 20:1
- 2 Samuel 12:26
- Deuteronomy 3:11
- Ezekiel 25:3-5
- Jeremiah 49:1-2

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7237

(Go back to: [Amos 1:14](#))

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: [Amos 1:8](#); [5:15](#); [9:12](#))

restore, restoration

Definition:

The terms “restore” and “restoration” refer to causing something to return to its original place or condition.

- When a diseased body part is restored, this means it has been “healed.”
- A broken relationship that is restored has been “reconciled.” God restores sinful people and brings them back to himself.
- If people have been restored to their home country, they have been “brought back” or “returned” to that country.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, ways to translate “restore” could include “renew” or “repay” or “return” or “heal” or “bring back.”
- Other expressions for this term could be “make new” or “make like new again.”
- When property is “restored,” it has been “repaired” or “replaced” or “given back” to its owner.
- Depending on the context, “restoration” could be translated as “renewal” or “healing” or “reconciliation.”

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 5:10
- Acts 3:21
- Acts 15:15-18
- Isaiah 49:5-6
- Jeremiah 15:19-21
- Lamentations 5:22
- Leviticus 6:5-7
- Luke 19:8
- Matthew 12:13
- Psalm 80:1-3

Word Data:

- Strong's: H7725, H7999, H8421, G06000, G26750

(Go back to: [Amos 1:3](#); [1:6](#); [1:9](#); [1:11](#); [1:13](#); [2:1](#); [2:4](#); [2:6](#); [4:6](#); [4:8](#); [4:9](#); [4:10](#); [4:11](#))

return, turn back

Definition:

The term “return” means to go back or to give something back.

- To “return to” something means to start doing that activity again. To “return to” a place or person means to go back to that place or person again.
- When the Israelites returned to their worship of idols, they were starting to worship them again.
- When they returned to Yahweh, they repented and were worshiping Yahweh again.
- To return land or things that were taken or received from someone else means to give that property back to the person it belongs to.

(See also: turn)

Bible References:

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5437, H7725, H7729, H8421, H8666, G03440, G03600, G03900, G18770, G18800, G19940, G52900

(Go back to: [Amos 1:8; 9:14](#))

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: [Amos 2:6](#); [5:12](#))

Sabbath

Definition:

The term “Sabbath” refers to the seventh day of the week, which God commanded the Israelites to set apart as a day of rest and doing no work.

- After God finished creating the world in six days, he rested on the seventh day. In the same way, God commanded the Israelites to set aside the seventh day as a special day to rest and worship him.
- The command to “keep the Sabbath holy” is one of the ten commandments that God wrote on the stone tablets that he gave Moses for the Israelites.
- Following the Jewish system of counting days, the Sabbath begins on Friday at sundown and lasts until Saturday at sundown.
- Sometimes in the Bible the Sabbath is called “Sabbath day” rather than only the Sabbath.

Translation Suggestions:

- This could also be translated as “resting day” or “day for resting” or “day of not working” or “God’s day of rest.”
- Some translations capitalize this term to show that it is a special day, as in “Sabbath Day” or “Resting Day.”
- Consider how this term is translated in a local or national language.

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

(See also: rest)

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:2-3
- Acts 13:26-27
- Exodus 31:14
- Isaiah 56:6-7
- Lamentations 2:6
- Leviticus 19:3
- Luke 13:14
- Mark 2:27
- Matthew 12:2
- Nehemiah 10:32-33

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:5** “Always be sure to keep the **Sabbath day** holy. That is, do all your work in six days, for the seventh day is a day for you to rest and to honor me.”
- **26:2** Jesus went to the town of Nazareth where he had lived during his childhood. On the **Sabbath**, he went to the place of worship.
- **41:3** The day after Jesus was buried was a **Sabbath** day, and the Jews were not permitted to go to the tomb on that day.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H4868, H7676, H7677, G43150, G45210

(Go back to: [Amos 8:5](#))

sackcloth

Definition:

Sackcloth was a coarse, scratchy type of cloth that was made from goat hair or camel hair.

- A person who wore clothing made from it would be uncomfortable. Sackcloth was worn to show mourning, grief, or humble repentance.
- The phrase “sackcloth and ashes” was a common term referring to a traditional expression of grief and repentance.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could also be translated as “coarse cloth from animal hair” or “clothes made of goat hair” or “rough, scratchy clothing.”
- Another way to translate this term could be “rough, scratchy mourning clothes.”
- The phrase “sit in sackcloth and ashes” could be translated as “show mourning and humility by wearing scratchy cloth and sitting in ashes.”

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

(See also: ash, camel, goat, humble, [mourn](#), repent, sign)

Bible References:

- 2 Samuel 3:31
- Genesis 37:34
- Joel 1:8-10
- Jonah 3:5
- Luke 10:13
- Matthew 11:21

Word Data:

- Strong's: H8242, G45260

(Go back to: [Amos 8:10](#))

sacrifice, sacrifices, offering

Definition:

In the Bible, the terms “sacrifice” and “offering” refer to special gifts given to God as an act of worshiping him. People also offered sacrifices to false gods.

sacrifice

- Sacrifices to God often involved the killing of an animal.
- Only the sacrifice of Jesus, God’s perfect sinless Son, can completely cleanse people from sin; animal sacrifices could never do that.

offering

- The word “offering” generally refers to anything that is offered or given. The term “sacrifice” refers to something that is given or done at great cost to the giver.
- Offerings to God were specific things that he commanded the Israelites to give in order to express devotion and obedience to him.
- The names of the different offerings, such as “burnt offering” and “peace offering,” indicated what kind of offering was being given.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “offering” could also be translated as “a gift to God” or “something given to God” or “something valuable that is presented to God.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sacrifice” could also be translated as “something valuable given in worship” or “a special animal killed and presented to God.”
- The action to “sacrifice” could be translated as to “give up something valuable” or to “kill an animal and give it to God.”
- Another way to translate “present yourself as a living sacrifice” could be “as you live your life, offer yourself to God as completely as an animal is offered on an altar.”

(See also: [altar](#), [burnt offering](#), drink offering, false god, fellowship offering, [freewill offering](#) peace offering, [priest](#), sin offering, worship)

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:6
- Acts 7:42
- Acts 21:25
- Genesis 4:3-5
- James 2:21-24
- Mark 1:43-44
- Mark 14:12
- Matthew 5:23

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:14** After Noah got off the boat, he built an altar and **sacrificed** some of each kind of animal which could be used for a **sacrifice**. God was happy with the **sacrifice** and blessed Noah and his family.
- **5:6** "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a **sacrifice** to me." Again Abraham obeyed God and prepared to **sacrifice** his son.
- **5:9** God had provided the ram to be the **sacrifice** instead of Isaac.
- **13:9** Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the Tent of Meeting as a **sacrifice** to God. A priest would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was **sacrificed** covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight.
- **17:6** David wanted to build a temple where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him **sacrifices**.
- **48:6** Jesus is the Great High Priest. Unlike other priests, he offered himself as the only **sacrifice** that could to take away the sin of all the people in the world.
- **48:8** But God provided Jesus, the Lamb of God, as a **sacrifice** to die in our place.
- **49:11** Because Jesus **sacrificed** himself, God can forgive any sin, even terrible sins.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0801, H0817, H0819, H1685, H1890, H1974, H2076, H2077, H2281, H2282, H2398, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2409, H3632, H4394, H4503, H4504, H5066, H5068, H5071, H5257, H5258, H5261, H5262, H5927, H5928, H5930, H6453, H6944, H6999, H7133, H7311, H8002, H8426, H8548, H8573, H8641, G02660, G03340, G10490, G14350, G14940, G23780, G23800, G36460, G43760, G54850

(Go back to: [Amos 4:4](#))

Samaria, Samaritan

Facts:

Samaria was the name of a city and its surrounding region in the northern part of Israel. The region was located between the Plain of Sharon on its west and the Jordan River on its east.

- In the Old Testament, Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom of Israel. Later the region surrounding it was also called Samaria.
- When the Assyrians conquered the northern kingdom of Israel, they captured the city of Samaria and forced most of the northern Israelites to leave the region, moving them far away to different cities in Assyria.
- The Assyrians also brought many foreigners into the region of Samaria to replace the Israelites who had been moved.
- Some of the Israelites who remained in that region married the foreigners who had moved there, and their descendants were called Samaritans.
- The Jews despised the Samaritans because they were only partly Jewish and because their ancestors had worshiped pagan gods.
- In New Testament times, the region of Samaria was bordered by the region of Galilee on its north and the region of Judea on its south.

(See also: Assyria, Galilee, [Judea](#), Sharon, kingdom of Israel)

Bible References:

- Acts 8:1-3
- Acts 8:5
- John 4:4-5
- Luke 9:51-53
- Luke 10:33

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **20:4** Then the Assyrians brought foreigners to live in the land where the kingdom of Israel had been. The foreigners rebuilt the destroyed cities and married the Israelites who were left there. The descendants of the Israelites who married foreigners were called **Samaritans**.
- **27:8** "The next person to walk down that road was a **Samaritan**. (**Samaritans** were the descendants of Jews who had married people from other nations. **Samaritans** and Jews hated each other.)"
- **27:9** "The **Samaritan** then lifted the man onto his own donkey and took him to a roadside inn where he took care of him."
- **45:7** He (Philip) went to **Samaria** where he preached about Jesus and many people were saved.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H8111, H8115, H8118, G45400, G45410, G45420

(Go back to: [Amos 3:9](#); [4:1](#); [6:1](#); [8:14](#))

sanctuary

Definition:

The term “sanctuary” literally means “holy place” and refers to a place that God has made sacred and holy. It also can refer to a place that provides protection and safety.

- In the Old Testament, the term “sanctuary” was often used to refer to the tabernacle or temple building where the “holy place” and “most holy place” were located.
- God referred to the sanctuary as the place where he lived among his people, the Israelites.
- He also called himself a “sanctuary” or safe place for his people where they can find protection.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term has a basic meaning of “holy place” or “place that is set apart.”
- Depending on the context, the term “sanctuary” could be translated as “holy place” or “sacred building” or “God’s holy dwelling place” or “holy place of protection” or “sacred place of safety.”
- The phrase “shekel of the sanctuary” could be translated as “kind of shekel given for the tabernacle” or “shekel used in paying the tax to take care of the temple.”
- Note: Be careful that the translation of this term does not refer to a worship room in a modern-day church.

(See also: [holy](#), Holy Spirit, [holy](#), set apart, tabernacle, tax, [temple](#))

Bible References:

- Amos 7:13
- Exodus 25:3-7
- Ezekiel 25:3
- Hebrews 8:1-2
- Luke 11:49-51
- Numbers 18:1
- Psalms 78:69

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4720, H6944, G00400

(Go back to: [Amos 7:9](#); [7:13](#))

sandal

Definition:

A sandal is a simple shoe with a flat sole that is held onto the foot by straps that go around the foot or ankle. Sandals are worn by both men and women.

- In ancient Israel, a sandal was sometimes used to confirm a legal transaction, such as the selling of property. One person would take off a sandal and give it to the other person to show that the transaction was legal and binding.
- John said that he was not worthy to even untie Jesus' sandals, which was a normal task for the servant or slave with the lowest status in a Jewish household.

Bible References:

- Acts 7:33
- Deuteronomy 25:10
- John 1:27
- Joshua 5:15
- Mark 6:7-9

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5274, H5275, H8288, G45470, G52660

(Go back to: [Amos 2:6](#); [8:6](#))

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: [Amos 2:14](#); [2:15](#); [9:1](#))

seek, search, look for

Definition:

The term “seek” means to look for something or someone. In the past tense, the verb is “sought.” This term is sometimes used figuratively, meaning to “attempt” or “make an effort” to do something or to ask for something.

- To “seek” or “look for” an opportunity to do something can mean to “try to find a time” to do it.
- To “seek Yahweh” means to “spend time and energy getting to know Yahweh and learning to obey him.”
- To “seek protection” means to “try to find a person or place that will protect you from danger.”
- To “seek justice” means to “make an effort to see that people are treated justly or fairly.”
- To “seek the truth” means to “make an effort to find out what the truth is.”
- To “seek favor” means to “urgently ask for favor” or to “do things to cause someone to help you.”

(See also: [just](#), [true](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 10:14
- Acts 17:26-27
- Hebrews 11:6
- Luke 11:9
- Psalms 27:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0579, H1156, H1239, H1243, H1245, H1556, H1875, H2470, H2603, H2658, H2664, H3289, H7125, H7592, H7836, H8446, G03270, G15670, G19340, G20520, G22120

(Go back to: [Amos 5:4](#); [5:5](#); [5:6](#); [5:14](#); [8:12](#))

servant, serve, slave, young man, young women

Definition:

A “servant” or “slave” refers to a person who works for (or obeys) another person, either by choice or by force. A servant was under his master's control. In the Bible, “servant” and “slave” are mostly interchangeable terms. The term “serve” generally means to do work for someone, and the concept can be applied in a wide variety of contexts.

- A slave was a kind of servant who was the property of the person he worked for. The person who bought a slave was called his “owner” or “master.” Some masters treated their slaves cruelly. Other masters treated their slaves well, like a valued member of the household. The term “slavery” means the state of being a slave.
- A person could be a slave temporarily, for instance while working to repay a debt to his owner.
- The words “young man” or “young woman” often mean “servant” or “slave.” This meaning will be discerned from context. One indicator of this situation is if the possessive is used, eg. “her young women” could be translated as “her servants” or “her slaves.”
- The term “enslave” means “to cause to be a slave” (usually by force).
- The New Testament speaks of human beings as “slaves of sin” until Jesus frees them from its control and power. When a person receives new life in Christ, he stops being a slave to sin and becomes a slave to righteousness.

Translation Suggestions

- The term “serve” can also be translated as “minister to” or “work for” or “take care of” or “obey,” depending on the context.
- The term “enslave” could be translated as “cause to not be free” or “force to serve others” or “put under the control of others.”
- The phrase “enslaved to” or “in bondage to” could be translated as “forced to be a slave of” or “forced to serve” or “under the control of.”
- To “serve God” can be translated as to “worship and obey God” or to “do the work that God has commanded.”
- In the Old Testament, God’s prophets and other people who worshiped God were often called his “servants.”
- In the New Testament, people who obeyed God through faith in Christ were often called his “servants.”
- To “serve tables” means to bring food to people who are sitting at tables, or more generally, to “distribute food.”
- In the context of a person serving guests, this term means “care for” or “serve food to” or “provide food for.” When Jesus told the disciples to “serve” the fish to the people, this could be translated as, “distribute” or “hand out” or “give.”
- People who teach others about God are said to serve both God and the ones they are teaching.
- The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians about how they used to “serve” the old covenant. This refers to obeying the laws of Moses. Now they “serve” the new covenant. That is, because of Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross, believers in Jesus are enabled by the Holy Spirit to please God and live holy lives.
- Paul talks about their actions in terms of their “service” to either the old or new covenant. This could be translated as “serving” or “obeying” or “devotion to.”
- Often, when a person referred to himself as “your servant” he was showing respect to the person addressed. That person may have had higher social status, or the speaker may be showing humility. It did not mean that the person speaking was an actual servant.

(See also: bondage, works, obey, [house](#), [lord](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 15:13
- Genesis 21:10-11
- Genesis 25:23
- Deuteronomy 24:7
- Jeremiah 30:8-9
- Matthew 4:10-11
- Matthew 6:24
- Matthew 10:24-25
- Matthew 13:27-28
- Mark 8:7-10
- Mark 9:33-35
- Luke 4:8
- Luke 12:37-38
- Luke 12:47-48
- Luke 22:26-27
- Acts 4:29-31
- Acts 6:2-4
- Acts 10:7-8
- Galatians 4:3
- Galatians 4:24-25
- Colossians 1:7-8
- Colossians 3:22-25
- 2 Timothy 2:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **6:1** When Abraham was very old and his son, Isaac, had grown to be a man, Abraham sent one of his **servants** back to the land where his relatives lived to find a wife for his son, Isaac.
- **8:4** The **slave** traders sold Joseph as a **slave** to a wealthy government official.
- **9:13** "I (God) will send you (Moses) to Pharaoh so that you can bring the Israelites out of their **slavery** in Egypt."
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, "O Yahweh, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your **servant**."
- **29:3** "Since the **servant** could not pay the debt, the king said, 'Sell this man and his family as **slaves** to make payment on his debt.'"
- **35:6** "All my father's **servants** have plenty to eat, and yet here I am starving."
- **47:4** The **slave** girl kept yelling as they walked, "These men are servants of the Most High God."
- **50:4** Jesus also said, "A **servant** is not greater than his master."

Word Data:

- (Servant) Strong's: H0519, H5288, H5647, H5649, H5650, H5657, H7916, H8198, H8334, G12490, G14010, G14020, G23240, G34070, G34110, G36100, G38160, G49830, G52570
- (Serve) H3547, H4929, H4931, H5647, H5656, H5673, H5975, H6213, H6399, H6402, H6440, H6633, H6635, H7272, H8104, H8120, H8199, H8278, H8334, G12470, G12480, G13980, G14020, G14380, G19830, G20640, G22120, G23230, G29990, G30000, G30090, G43370, G43420, G47540, G50870, G52560
- (Enslave) H3533, G26150

(Go back to: [Amos 3:7](#))

silver

Definition:

Silver is a shiny, gray precious metal used to make coins, jewelry, containers, and ornaments.

- The various containers that are made include silver cups and bowls, and other things used for cooking, eating, or serving.
- Silver and gold were used in the building of the tabernacle and the temple. The temple in Jerusalem had containers made of silver.
- In Bible times, a shekel was a unit of weight, and a purchase was often priced at a certain number of shekels of silver. By New Testament times there were silver coins of various weights that were measured in shekels.
- Joseph's brothers sold him as a slave for twenty shekels of silver.
- Judas was paid thirty silver coins for betraying Jesus.

(See also: tabernacle, [temple](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:9-11
- 1 Samuel 2:36
- 2 Kings 25:13-15
- Acts 3:6
- Matthew 26:15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3701, H3702, H7192, G06930, G06940, G06950, G06960, G14060

(Go back to: [Amos 2:6](#); [8:6](#))

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a “sinful nature,” a nature that that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn’t keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- To “sin” could also be translated as to “disobey God” or to “do wrong.”
- Depending on the context “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebellious against God.”
- Depending on the context the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”
- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don’t see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: disobey, [evil](#), flesh, tax collector)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1-3
- 1 John 1:10
- 1 John 2:2
- 2 Samuel 7:12-14
- Acts 3:19
- Daniel 9:24
- Genesis 4:7
- Hebrews 12:2
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 18:23
- Leviticus 4:14
- Luke 15:18
- Matthew 12:31

- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- **13:12** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- **20:1** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- **35:1** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- **48:8** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- **49:17** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0817, H0819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G02640, G02650, G02660, G02680, G03610, G37810, G39000, G42580

(Go back to: [Amos 1 General Notes](#); [Notes](#); [Notes](#); [5:12](#); [Notes](#))

Sodom

Definition:

Sodom was a city in the southern part of Canaan where Abraham's nephew Lot lived with his wife and children.

- The land of the region surrounding Sodom was very well watered and fertile, so Lot chose to live there when he first settled in Canaan.
- The exact location of this city is not known because Sodom and the nearby city of Gomorrah were completely destroyed by God as punishment for the evil things the people there were doing.
- The most significant sin that the people of Sodom and Gomorrah were practicing was homosexuality.

(See also: Canaan, [Gomorrah](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 10:19
- Genesis 13:12
- Matthew 10:15
- Matthew 11:24

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5467, G46700

(Go back to: [Amos 4:11](#))

son

Definition:

The male offspring of a man and a woman is called their “son” for his entire life. He is also called a son of that man and a son of that woman. An “adopted son” is a male who has been legally placed into the position of being a son.

- The phrase “son of” can be used to identify a person’s father, mother, or an ancestor from some previous generation. This phrase is used in genealogies and many other places.
- The “sons of Israel” are usually the Israelite nation (after Genesis).
- Using “son of” to give the name of the father frequently helps distinguish people who have the same name. For example, “Azariah son of Zadok” and “Azariah son of Nathan” in 1 Kings 4, and “Azariah son of Amaziah” in 2 Kings 15 are three different men.
- The phrase “son of” can be used to associate the person with whatever person or concept comes next. The meaning is then greatly determined by context. It can be positive (eg. 2 Kings 2:16: “sons of ability”), negative (eg. 2 Samuel 7:10: “sons of wickedness”), denote membership in a group, express contempt by not naming the person (eg. “you sons of Zeruiah”), etc.

Translation Suggestions:

- In most occurrences of this term, it is best to translate “son” by the literal term in the language that is used to refer to a son.
- When translating the term “Son of God,” the project language’s common term for “son” should be used.
- Sometimes “sons” can be translated as “children,” when both males and females are being referred to. For example, “sons of God” could be translated as “children of God” since this expression also includes girls and women.

(See also: descendant, [ancestor](#), Son of God, sons of God)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 18:15
- 1 Kings 13:2
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5
- Galatians 4:7
- Hosea 11:1
- Isaiah 9:6
- Matthew 3:17
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 8:12
- Nehemiah 10:28

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:8** God spoke to Abram and promised again that he would have a **son** and as many descendants as the stars in the sky.
- **4:9** God said, “I will give you a **son** from your own body.”
- **5:5** About a year later, when Abraham was 100 years old and Sarah was 90, Sarah gave birth to Abraham’s **son**.
- **5:8** When they reached the place of sacrifice, Abraham tied up his **son** Isaac and laid him on an altar. He was about to kill his **son** when God said, “Stop! Do not hurt the boy! Now I know that you fear me because you did not keep your only **son** from me.”

- **9:7** When she saw the baby, she took him as her own **son**.
- **11:6** God killed every one of the Egyptians' firstborn **sons**.
- **18:1** After many years, David died, and his **son** Solomon began to rule.
- **26:4** "Is this the **son** of Joseph?" they said.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1060, H1121, H1123, H1248, H3173, H3206, H3211, H4497, H5209, H5220, G38160, G50430, G52070

(Go back to: [Amos 1:1](#); [1:13](#); [2:11](#); [3:1](#); [3:12](#); [4:5](#); [7:14](#); [7:17](#); [9:7](#))

spirit, wind, breath

Definition:

The term "spirit" refers to the non-physical part of a person which cannot be seen. In biblical times, the concept of a person's spirit was closely related to the concept of a person's breath. The term can also refer to wind, that is, the movement of air in the natural world.

- The term "spirit" can refer to a being that does not have a physical body, such as an evil spirit.
- In general, the term "spiritual" describes things in the non-physical world.
- The term "spirit of" can also mean "having the characteristics of," such as in "spirit of wisdom" or "in the spirit of Elijah." Sometimes the Bible applies this term in the context of a person's attitude or emotional state, such as "spirit of fear" and "spirit of jealousy."
- Jesus said that God is a spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, some ways to translate "spirit" might include "non-physical being" or "inside part" or "inner being."
- In some contexts, the term "spirit" could be translated as "evil spirit" or "evil spirit being."
- Sometimes the term "spirit" is used to express the feelings of a person, as in "my spirit was grieved in my inmost being." This could also be translated as "I felt grieved in my spirit" or "I felt deeply grieved."
- The phrase "spirit of" could be translated as "character of" or "influence of" or "attitude of" or "thinking (that is) characterized by."
- Depending on the context, "spiritual" could be translated as "non-physical" or "from the Holy Spirit" or "God's" or "part of the non-physical world."
- The phrase "spiritual maturity" could be translated as "godly behavior that shows obedience to the Holy Spirit."
- The term "spiritual gift" could be translated as "special ability that the Holy Spirit gives."
- Sometimes this term can be translated as "wind" when referring to the simple movement of air or "breath" when referring to air movement caused by living beings.

(See also: soul, Holy Spirit, demon, breath)

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:5
- 1 John 4:3
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23
- Acts 5:9
- Colossians 1:9
- Ephesians 4:23
- Genesis 7:21-22
- Genesis 8:1
- Isaiah 4:4
- Mark 1:23-26
- Matthew 26:41
- Philippians 1:27

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **13:3** Three days later, after the people had prepared themselves **spiritually**, God came down on top of Mount Sinai with thunder, lightning, smoke, and a loud trumpet blast.
- **40:7** Then Jesus cried out, "It is finished! Father, I give my **spirit** into your hands." Then he bowed his head and gave up his **spirit**.
- **45:5** As Stephen was dying, he cried out, "Jesus, receive my **spirit**."
- **48:7** All the people groups are blessed through him, because everyone who believes in Jesus is saved from sin, and becomes a **spiritual** descendant of Abraham.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0178, H1172, H5397, H7307, H7308, G41510, G41520, G41530, G53260, G54270

(Go back to: [Amos 4:13](#))

statute

Definition:

A statute is a specific written law that provides guidance for people to live by.

- The term “statute” is similar in meaning to “ordinance” and “command” and “law” and “decree.” All these terms involve instructions and requirements that God gives to his people or rulers give to their people.
- King David said that he delighted himself in Yahweh’s statutes.
- The term “statute” could also be translated as “specific command” or “special decree.”

(See also: [command](#), [decree](#), [law](#), [ordinance](#), [Yahweh](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 11:11-13
- Deuteronomy 6:20-23
- Ezekiel 33:15
- Numbers 19:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2706, H2708, H7010, G13450

(Go back to: [Amos 2:4](#))

strength, strengthen, strong

Facts:

The term “strength” refers to physical, emotional, or spiritual power. To “strengthen” someone or something means to make that person or object stronger.

- “Strength” can also refer to the power to withstand some kind of opposing force.
- A person has “strength of will” if he is able to avoid sinning when tempted.
- One writer of the Psalms called Yahweh his “strength” because God helped him to be strong.
- If a physical structure like a wall or building is being “strengthened,” people are rebuilding the structure, reinforcing it with more stones or brick so that it can withstand an attack.

Translation Suggestions

- In general, the term “strengthen” can be translated as “cause to be strong” or “make more powerful.”
- In a spiritual sense, the phrase “strengthen your brothers” could also be translated as “encourage your brothers” or “help your brothers to persevere.”
- The following examples show the meaning of these terms, and therefore how they can be translated, when they are included in longer expressions.
 - “puts strength on me like a belt” means “causes me to be completely strong, like a belt that completely surrounds my waist.”
 - “in quietness and trust will be your strength” means “acting calmly and trusting in God will make you spiritually strong.”
 - “will renew their strength” means “will become stronger again.”
 - “by my strength and by my wisdom I acted” means “I have done all this because I am so strong and wise.”
 - “strengthen the wall” means “reinforce the wall” or “rebuild the wall.”
 - “I will strengthen you” means “I will cause you to be strong”
 - “in Yahweh alone are salvation and strength” means “Yahweh is the only one who saves us and strengthens us.”
 - “the rock of your strength” means “the faithful one who makes you strong”
 - “with the saving strength of his right hand” means “he strongly rescues you from trouble like someone who holds you safely with his strong hand.”
 - “of little strength” means “not very strong” or “weak.”
 - “with all my strength” means “using my best efforts” or “strongly and completely.”

(See also: faithful, persevere, right hand, [save](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Kings 18:19-21
- 2 Peter 2:11
- Luke 10:27
- Psalm 21:1

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0193, H0202, H0353, H0360, H0386, H0410, H0553, H0556, H1369, H1396, H2220, H2388, H2391, H2392, H2393, H2428, H3027, H3028, H3559, H3581, H3811, H3955, H4581, H5326, H5331, H5582, H5797, H5807, H5810, H5934, H5975, H6106, H6109, H6697, H6965, H7292, H7307, H8003, H8443, H8632, H8633,

G04610, G09500, G14110, G14120, G17430, G17650, G18400, G19910, G24790, G24800, G29010, G29040,
G36190, G37560, G45990, G47320, G47330, G47410

(Go back to: [Amos 2:14](#))

sword, swordsmen

Definition:

A sword is a flat-bladed metal weapon used to cut or stab. It has a handle and a long, pointed blade with a very sharp cutting edge.

- In ancient times the length of a sword's blade was about 60 to 91 centimeters.
- Some swords have two sharp edges and are called "double-edged" or "two-edged" swords.
- Jesus' disciples had swords for self defense. With his sword, Peter cut off the ear of the high priest's servant.
- Both John the Baptist and the apostle James were beheaded with swords.

Translation Suggestions

- A sword is used as a metaphor for God's word. God's teachings in the Bible exposed people's innermost thoughts and convicted them of their sin. In a similar way, a sword cuts deeply, causing pain. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- One way to translate this figurative use would be, "God's word is like a sword, which cuts deeply and exposes sin."
- Another figurative use of this term occurred in the book of Psalms, where the tongue or speech of a person was compared to a sword, which can injure people. This could be translated as "the tongue is like a sword that can badly injure someone."
- If swords are not known in your culture, this word could be translated with the name of another long-bladed weapon that is used to cut or stab.
- A sword could also be described as a "sharp weapon" or "long knife." Some translations could include a picture of a sword.

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

(See also: James (brother of Jesus), John (the Baptist), tongue, word of God)

Bible References:

- Acts 12:2
- Genesis 27:40
- Genesis 34:25
- Luke 2:33-35
- Luke 21:24
- Matthew 10:34
- Matthew 26:55
- Revelation 1:16

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0019, H1300, H2719, H4380, H6609, H7524, H7973, G31620, G45010

(Go back to: [Amos 1:11](#); [4:10](#); [7:9](#); [7:11](#); [7:17](#); [9:1](#); [9:10](#))

temple, house, house of God

Facts:

The temple was a building surrounded by walled courtyards where the Israelites came to pray and to offer sacrifices to God. It was located on Mount Moriah in the city of Jerusalem.

- Often the term “temple” referred to the whole temple complex, including the courtyards that surrounded the main building. Sometimes it referred only to the building.
- The temple building had two rooms, the Holy Place and the Most Holy Place.
- God referred to the temple as his dwelling place.
- King Solomon built the Temple during his reign. It was supposed to be the permanent place of worship in Jerusalem.
- In the New Testament, the term “temple of the Holy Spirit” is used to refer to believers in Jesus as a group, because the Holy Spirit lives in them.

Translation Suggestions:

- Usually when the text says that people were “in the temple,” it is referring to the courtyards outside the building. This could be translated as “in the temple courtyards” or “in the temple complex.”
- Where it refers specifically to the building itself, some translations translate “temple” as “temple building,” to make it the reference clear.
- Ways to translate “temple” could include, “God’s holy house” or “sacred worship place.”
- Often in the Bible, the temple is referred to as “the house of Yahweh” or “the house of God.”

(See also: [sacrifice](#), Solomon, Babylon, Holy Spirit, tabernacle, courtyard, [Zion](#), [house](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 3:2
- Acts 3:8
- Ezekiel 45:18-20
- Luke 19:46
- Nehemiah 10:28
- Psalm 79:1-3

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:6** David wanted to build a **temple** where all the Israelites could worship God and offer him sacrifices.
- **18:2** In Jerusalem, Solomon built the **Temple** for which his father David had planned and gathered materials. Instead of at the Tent of Meeting, people now worshiped God and offered sacrifices to him at the **Temple**. God came and was present in the **Temple**, and he lived there with his people.
- **20:7** They (Babylonians) captured the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the **Temple**, and took away all the treasures.
- **20:13** When the people arrived in Jerusalem, they rebuilt the **Temple** and the wall around the city of the city and the **Temple**.
- **25:4** Then Satan took Jesus to the highest point on the **Temple** and said, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, ‘God will command his angels to carry you so your foot does not hit a stone.’”
- **40:7** When he died, there was an earthquake and the large curtain that separated the people from the presence of God in the **Temple** was torn in two, from the top to the bottom.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1004, H1964, H1965, G14930, G24110, G34850

(Go back to: [Amos 1:4](#); [3:13](#); [6:9](#); [8:3](#))

testimony, testify, witness, eyewitness, evidence

Definition:

When a person gives “testimony” he makes a statement about something he knows, claiming that the statement is true. To “testify” is to give “testimony.”

- In some places in the Old Testament, “Testimony” refers specifically to the tablets of stone on which Yahweh wrote his ten commandments. From that use it came to refer to God’s law more broadly.
- Often a person “testifies” about something he has experienced directly.
- A witness who gives “false testimony” does not tell the truth about what happened.
- Sometimes the term “testimony” refers to a prophecy that a prophet has stated.
- In the New Testament, this term was often used to refer to how Jesus’ followers testified about the events of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection.

The term “witness” refers to a person who has personally experienced something that happened. Usually a witness is also someone who testifies about what they know is true. The term “eyewitness” emphasizes that the person was actually there and saw what happened.

- To “witness” something means to see it happen.
- At a trial, a witness “gives witness” or “bears witness.” This has the same meaning as “testify.”
- Witnesses are expected to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard.
- A witness who does not tell the truth about what happened is called a “false witness.” He is said to “give false witness” or to “bear false witness.”
- The expression “be a witness between” means that something or someone will be evidence that a contract has been made. The witness will make sure each person does what he has promised to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “testify” or “give testimony” could also be translated as “tell the facts” or “tell what was seen or heard” or “tell from personal experience” or “give evidence” or “tell what happened.”
- Ways to translate “testimony” could include, “report of what happened” or “statement of what is true” or “evidence” or “what has been said” or “prophecy.”
- Ways to translate “Testimony” could include, “the stone slabs on which I wrote my commands” or “God’s law” or “God’s commands” or “the record of the agreement between Yahweh and Israel.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony to them” could be translated as to “show them what is true” or to “prove to them what is true.”
- The phrase, “as a testimony against them” could be translated as “which will show them their sin” or “exposing their hypocrisy” or “which will prove that they are wrong.”
- To “give false testimony” could be translated as “say false things about” or “state things that are not true.”
- The term “witness” or “eyewitness” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person seeing it” or “the one who saw it happen” or “those who saw and heard (those things).”
- Something that is “a witness” could be translated as “guarantee” or “sign of our promise” or “something that testifies that this is true.”
- The phrase “you will be my witnesses” could also be translated as “you will tell other people about me” or “you will teach people the truth that I taught you” or “you will tell people what you have seen me do and heard me teach.”
- To “witness to” could be translated as to “tell what was seen” or to “testify” or to “state what happened.”
- To “witness” something could be translated as to “see something” or to “experience something happen.”

(See also: ark of the covenant, [guilt](#), [judge](#), [prophet](#), true)

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 31:28
- Micah 6:3
- Matthew 26:60
- Mark 1:44
- John 1:7
- John 3:33
- Acts 4:32-33
- Acts 7:44
- Acts 13:31
- Romans 1:9
- 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12
- 1 Timothy 5:19-20
- 2 Timothy 1:8
- 2 Peter 1:16-18
- 1 John 5:6-8
- 3 John 1:12
- Revelation 12:11

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **39:2** Inside the house, the Jewish leaders put Jesus on trial. They brought many **false witnesses** who lied about him.
- **39:4** The high priest tore his clothes in anger and shouted, "We do not need any more **witnesses**. You have heard him say that he is the Son of God. What is your judgment?"
- **42:8** "It was also written in the scriptures that my disciples will proclaim that everyone should repent in order to receive forgiveness for their sins. They will do this starting in Jerusalem, and then go to all people groups everywhere. You are **witnesses** of these things."
- **43:7** "We are **witnesses** to the fact that God raised Jesus to life again."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H5707, H5713, H5715, H5749, H6030, H8584, G02670, G12630, G19570, G26490, G31400, G31410, G31420, G31430, G31440, G43030, G48280, G49010, G55750, G55760, G55770, G60200

(Go back to: [Amos 3:13](#))

threshold, doorway

Definition:

The term “threshold” refers to the bottom part of a doorway or the part of a building that is just inside the door.

- Sometimes a threshold is a strip of wood or stone that must be stepped over in order to enter a room or building.
- Both a gate and the opening to a tent can also have a threshold.
- This term should be translated with a term in the project language that refers to the place at the very entrance to a home that a person steps across.
- If there is no term for this, “threshold” could also be translated as “doorway” or “opening” or “entranceway,” depending on the context.

(See also: [gate](#), tent)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:17-19
- Ezekiel 9:3
- Isaiah 6:4
- Proverbs 17:19

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4670, H5592

(Go back to: [Amos 9:1](#))

transgress, transgression

Definition:

The term “transgress” means to cross a line or to violate a boundary. The term is often used figuratively, meaning to break a command, rule, or moral code.

- This term is very similar to the word “trespass,” but is generally used more often to describe violations against God than against other people.
- To “transgress” can also be described as to “cross a line,” that is, to go beyond a limit or boundary that has been set for the good of the person and others.

Translation Suggestions:

- To “transgress” could be translated as to “sin” or to “disobey” or to “rebel.”
- If a verse or passage uses two terms that mean “sin” or “transgress” or “trespass,” it is important, if possible, to use different ways to translate these terms. When the Bible uses two or more terms with similar meanings in the same context, usually its purpose is to emphasize what is being said or to show its importance.

(See: [parallelism](#))

(See also: [disobey](#), [sin](#), [trespass](#), [iniquity](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 4:6
- Daniel 9:24-25
- Galatians 3:19-20
- Galatians 6:1-2
- Numbers 14:17-19
- Psalm 32:1

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0898, H4603, H4604, H6586, H6588, G04580, G04590, G38450, G38470, G38480, G39280

(Go back to: [Amos 4:4](#))

tremble, stagger, shake

Definition:

The term “tremble” means to quiver or to shake slightly and repeatedly, usually from fear or distress. The term can also be used figuratively, meaning “to be very afraid.”

- Sometimes when the ground shakes it is said to “tremble.” It can do this during an earthquake or in response to a very loud noise.
- The Bible says that in the presence of the Lord the earth will tremble. This could mean that the people of the earth will shake out of fear of God or that the earth itself will shake.
- This term could be translated as “be afraid” or “fear God” or “shake,” depending on the context.

(See also: [earth](#), [fear](#), [Lord](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Corinthians 7:15
- 2 Samuel 22:44-46
- Acts 16:29-31
- Jeremiah 5:22
- Luke 8:47

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1674, H2111, H2112, H2151, H2342, H2648, H2729, H2730, H2731, H5128, H5568, H6342, H6426, H6427, H7264, H7268, H7269, H7322, H7460, H7461, H7481, H7493, H7578, H8078, H8653, G17900, G51410, G51560, G54250

(Go back to: [Amos 8:8](#))

tribe, tribal, tribesmen

Definition:

A tribe is a group of people who are descended from a common ancestor.

- People from the same tribe usually also share a common language and culture.
- In the Old Testament, God divided the people of Israel into twelve tribes. Each tribe was descended from a son or grandson of Jacob.
- A tribe is smaller than a nation, but larger than a clan.

(See also: clan, [nation](#), [people group](#), twelve tribes of Israel)

Bible References:

- 1 Samuel 10:19
- 2 Kings 17:16-18
- Genesis 25:16
- Genesis 49:17
- Luke 2:36-38

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0523, H4294, H7625, H7626, G14290, G54430

(Go back to: [Amos 1:5](#); [1:8](#))

trumpet, trumpeters

Definition:

The term “trumpet” refers to an instrument for producing music or for calling people to gather together for an announcement or meeting.

- A trumpet was commonly made from either metal, seashell, or an animal horn.
- Trumpets were most commonly blown to call people to come together for battle, and for Israel's public assemblies.
- The book of Revelation describes a scene in the end times in which angels blow their trumpets to signal the outpouring of the wrath of God on the earth.

(See also: [angel](#), [assembly](#), [earth](#), horn, [Israel](#), wrath)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 13:7-8
- 2 Kings 9:13
- Exodus 19:12-13
- Hebrews 12:19
- Matthew 6:2
- Matthew 24:31

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2689, H2690, H3104, H7782, H8619, H8643, G45360, G45370, G45380

(Go back to: [Amos 2:2](#); [3:6](#))

Tyre, Tyrians

Facts:

Tyre was an ancient Canaanite city located on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea in a region that is now part of the modern-day country of Lebanon. Its people were called "Tyrians."

- Part of the city was located on an island in the sea, about one kilometer from the mainland.
- Because of its location and its valuable natural resources, such as cedar trees, Tyre had a prosperous trading industry and was very wealthy.
- King Hiram of Tyre sent wood from cedar trees and skilled laborers to help build a palace for King David.
- Years later, Hiram also sent King Solomon wood and skilled laborers to help build the temple. Solomon paid him with large amounts of wheat and olive oil.
- Tyre was often associated with the nearby ancient city of Sidon. These were the most important cities of the region of Canaan called Phoenicia.

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

(See also: Canaan, [cedar](#), [Israel](#), the sea, Phoenicia, Sidon)

Bible References:

- Acts 12:20
- Mark 3:7-8
- Matthew 11:22
- Matthew 15:22

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6865, H6876, G51830, G51840

(Go back to: [Amos 1:9](#); [1:10](#))

vineyard

Definition:

A vineyard is a large garden area where grapevines are grown and grapes are cultivated.

- A vineyard often has a wall around it to protect the fruit from thieves and animals.
- God compared the people of Israel to a vineyard that did not bear good fruit. (See: [Metaphor](#))
- Vineyard could be also translated as “grapevine garden” or “grape plantation.”

(See also: [grape](#), [Israel](#), [vine](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 9:20-21
- Luke 13:6
- Luke 20:15
- Matthew 20:2
- Matthew 21:40-41

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1612, H3754, H3755, H8284, G02900

(Go back to: [Amos 4:9](#); [5:11](#); [5:17](#); [9:14](#))

virgin, virginity

Definition:

A virgin is a woman who has never had sexual relations.

- The prophet Isaiah said that the Messiah would be born from a virgin.
- Mary was a virgin when she was pregnant with Jesus. He did not have a human father.
- Some languages may have a term that is a polite way of referring to a virgin. (See: [Euphemism](#))

(See also: Christ, Isaiah, Jesus, Mary)

Bible References:

- Genesis 24:15-16
- Luke 1:27
- Luke 1:35
- Matthew 1:23
- Matthew 25:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **21:9** The prophet Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be born from a **virgin**.
- **22:4** She (Mary) was a **virgin** and was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.
- **22:5** Mary replied, "How can this be, since I am a **virgin**?"
- **49:1** An angel told a **virgin** named Mary that she would give birth to God's Son. So while she was still a **virgin**, she gave birth to a son and named him Jesus.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1330, H1331, G39320, G39330

(Go back to: [Amos 5:2](#); [8:13](#))

voice

Definition:

The term “voice” refers to audible sound that a person makes when speaking or communicating. In the Bible, the term can be used figuratively to refer to the concepts of sound, communication, and/or obedience.

Translation Suggestions

- The expression “to hear someone’s voice” can mean either “to hear someone speaking” or “to heed what someone says.”
- The Bible describes God as “speaking” and having a “voice,” even though God doesn’t have a physical body in the same way a human being does.
- The term “voice” sometimes implies the presence of a person, as in this statement: “A voice is heard in the desert saying, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord.’” This could be translated as “A person is heard calling out in the desert....” (See: [synecdoche](#))
- However, sometimes the word “voice” is used for objects that cannot literally speak, such as when David exclaims in the psalms that the heavens have a “voice” that reaches the whole earth. This means that the objects in the sky communicate something to human beings about God the Creator. (See: [metaphor](#))

(See also: [call](#), proclaim, splendor.)

Bible References:

- John 5:36-38
- Luke 1:42
- Luke 9:35
- Matthew 3:17
- Matthew 12:19

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6963, H7032, H7445, H8193, G29060, G54560

(Go back to: [Amos 2:2](#))

walk, walked

Definition:

The term “walk” is often used in a figurative sense to mean “live.”

- “Enoch walked with God” means that Enoch lived in a close relationship with God.
- To “walk by the Spirit” means to be guided by the Holy Spirit so that we do things that please and honor God.
- To “walk in” God’s commands or God’s ways means to “live in obedience to” his commands, that is, to “obey his commands” or “do his will.”
- When God says he will “walk among” his people, it means that he is living among them or closely interacting with them.
- To “walk contrary to” means to live or behave in a way that is against something or someone.
- To “walk after” means to seek or pursue someone or something. It can also mean to act in the same way as someone else.

Translation Suggestions:

- It is best to translate “walk” literally, as long as the correct meaning will be understood.
- Otherwise, figurative uses of “walk” could also be translated by “live” or “act” or “behave.”
- The phrase “walk by the Spirit” could be translated by, “live in obedience to the Holy Spirit” or “behave in a way that is pleasing to the Holy Spirit” or “do things that are pleasing to God as the Holy Spirit guides you.”
- To “walk in God’s commands” could be translated by “live by God’s commands” or “obey God’s commands.”
- The phrase “walked with God” could be translated as “lived in close relationship with God by obeying and honoring him.”

(See also: Holy Spirit, honor)

Bible References:

- 1 John 1:7
- 1 Kings 2:4
- Colossians 2:7
- Galatians 5:25
- Genesis 17:1
- Isaiah 2:5
- Jeremiah 13:10
- Micah 4:2

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H1869, H1980, H1981, H3212, H4108, G17040, G40430, G41980, G47480

(Go back to: [Amos 2:4](#); [2:7](#); [7:12](#); [7:15](#); [9:4](#))

watch, guard, keep, take heed, beware

Definition:

The term “watch” means to look at something very closely and carefully. It also has several figurative meanings. A “watchman” was someone whose job was to guard a city by looking carefully all around him for any danger or threat to the people in the city.

- The command to “watch your life and doctrine closely” means to be careful to live wisely and to not believe false teachings.
- To “watch out” is a warning to be careful to avoid a danger or harmful influence.
- To “watch” or “keep watch” means to always be alert and on guard against sin and evil. It can also mean to “be ready.”
- To “keep watch over” or “keep close watch” can mean to guard, protect or take care of someone or something.
- Other ways of translating “watch” could include “pay close attention to” or “be diligent” or “be very careful” or “be on guard.”
- Other words for “watchman” are “sentry” or “guard.”

Bible References:

- 1 Thessalonians 5:6
- Hebrews 13:17
- Jeremiah 31:4-6
- Mark 8:15
- Mark 13:33-34
- Matthew 25:10-13

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0821, H2370, H4929, H4931, H5027, H5341, H6486, H6822, H6836, H6974, H7462, H7789, H7919, H8104, H8108, H8245, G00690, G09910, G11270, G14920, G23340, G28920, G35250, G37080, G39060, G43370, G46480, G50830, G54380

(Go back to: [Amos 1:11](#); [2:4](#))

wheat

Definition:

Wheat is a type of grain that people grow for food. When the Bible mentions “grain” or “seeds,” it is often talking about wheat grain or seeds.

- The wheat seeds or grains grow at the top of the wheat plant.
- After harvesting the wheat, the grain is separated from the stalk of the plant by threshing it. The stalk of the wheat plant is also called “straw” and is often placed on the ground for animals to sleep on.
- After threshing, the chaff surrounding the grain seed is separated from the grain by winnowing and is thrown away.
- People grind the wheat grain into flour, and use this for making bread.

(See also: barley, chaff, [grain](#), seed, thresh, winnow)

Bible References:

- Acts 27:36-38
- Exodus 34:21-22
- John 12:24
- Luke 3:17
- Matthew 3:12
- Matthew 13:26

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1250, H2406, G46210

(Go back to: [Amos 5:11](#); [8:5](#); [8:6](#))

wine, wineskin, new wine

Definition:

In the Bible, the term “wine” refers to a kind of fermented drink made from the juice of a fruit called grapes. Wine was stored in “wineskins,” which were containers made out of animal skin.

- The term “new wine” referred to grape juice that had just been taken from the grape and was not fermented yet. Sometimes the term “wine” also referred to unfermented grape juice.
- To make wine, grapes are crushed in a winepress so that the juice comes out. The juice eventually ferments and alcohol forms in it.
- In Bible times, wine was the normal drink with meals. It did not have as much alcohol as present-day wine has.
- Before wine was served for a meal, it was often mixed with water.
- A wineskin that was old and brittle would get cracks in it, which allowed the wine to leak out. New wineskins were soft and flexible, which meant they did not tear easily and could store the wine safely.
- If wine is unknown in your culture, it could be translated as “fermented grape juice” or “fermented drink made from a fruit called grapes” or “fermented fruit juice.” (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))
- Ways to translate “wineskin” could include “bag for wine” or “animal skin wine bag” or “animal skin container for wine.”

(See also: [grape](#), [vine](#), [vineyard](#), [winepress](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Timothy 5:23
- Genesis 9:21
- Genesis 49:12
- John 2:3-5
- John 2:10
- Matthew 9:17
- Matthew 11:18

smashed

Word Data:

- Strong's: H2561, H2562, H3196, H4469, H4997, H5435, H6025, H6071, H8492, G10980, G36310, G38200, G39430

(Go back to: [Amos 2:8](#); [2:12](#); [5:11](#); [6:6](#); [9:13](#); [9:14](#))

Yahweh

Facts:

The term “Yahweh” is God’s personal name in the Old Testament. The specific origin of this name is unknown, but it is probably derived from the Hebrew verb meaning, “to be.”

- Following tradition, many Bible versions use the term “LORD” or “the LORD” to represent “Yahweh.” This tradition resulted from the fact that historically, the Jewish people became afraid of mispronouncing Yahweh’s name and started saying “Lord” every time the term “Yahweh” appeared in the text. Modern Bibles write “LORD” with all capital letters to show respect for God’s personal name and to distinguish it from “Lord” which is a different Hebrew word.
- The ULT and UST texts always translate this term as, “Yahweh,” in agreement with the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.
- The term “Yahweh” never occurs in the original text of the New Testament; only the Greek term for “Lord” is used, even when quoting the Old Testament.
- In the Old Testament, when God spoke about himself, he would often use his name instead of a pronoun.

Translation Suggestions:

- “Yahweh” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “I am” or “living one” or “the one who is” or “he who is alive.”
- This term could also be written in a way that is similar to how “Yahweh” is spelled.
- Some church denominations prefer not to use the term “Yahweh” and instead use the traditional rendering, “LORD.” An important consideration is that this may be confusing when read aloud because it will sound the same as the title “Lord.” Some languages may have an affix or other grammatical marker that could be added to distinguish “LORD” as a name (Yahweh) from “Lord” as a title.
- It is best if possible to keep the name Yahweh where it literally occurs in the text, but some translations may decide to use only a pronoun in some places, to make the text more natural and clear.
- Introduce the quote with something like, “This is what Yahweh says.”

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

(See also: [God](#), [Lord](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 21:20
- 1 Samuel 16:7
- Daniel 9:3
- Ezekiel 17:24
- Genesis 2:4
- Genesis 4:3-5
- Genesis 28:13
- Hosea 11:12
- Isaiah 10:4
- Isaiah 38:8
- Job 12:10
- Joshua 1:9
- Lamentations 1:5
- Leviticus 25:35
- Malachi 3:4
- Micah 2:5

- Micah 6:5
- Numbers 8:11
- Psalm 124:3
- Ruth 1:21
- Zechariah 14:5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **9:14** God said, "I AM WHO I AM. Tell them, 'I AM has sent me to you.' Also tell them, 'I am **Yahweh**, the God of your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is my name forever.'"
- **13:4** Then God gave them the covenant and said, "I am **Yahweh**, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other gods."
- **13:5** "Do not make idols or worship them, for I, **Yahweh**, am a jealous God."
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite gods instead of **Yahweh**, the true God.
- **19:10** Then Elijah prayed, "O **Yahweh**, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, show us today that you are the God of Israel and that I am your servant."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3050, H3068, H3069

(Go back to: [Amos 1:2](#); [1:3](#); [1:5](#); [1:6](#); [1:9](#); [1:11](#); [1:13](#); [1:15](#); [2:1](#); [2:3](#); [2:4](#); [2:6](#); [2:11](#); [2:16](#); [3:1](#); [3:6](#); [3:10](#); [3:12](#); [3:15](#); [4:3](#); [4:6](#); [4:8](#); [4:9](#); [4:10](#); [4:11](#); [4:13](#); [5:4](#); [5:6](#); [5:8](#); [5:14](#); [5:15](#); [5:16](#); [5:17](#); [5:18](#); [5:20](#); [5:27](#); [6:8](#); [6:10](#); [6:11](#); [6:14](#); [7:3](#); [7:6](#); [7:8](#); [7:15](#); [7:16](#); [7:17](#); [8:2](#); [8:7](#); [8:11](#); [8:12](#); [9:6](#); [9:7](#); [9:8](#); [9:12](#); [9:13](#); [9:15](#))

Zion, Mount Zion

Definition:

Originally, the term “Zion” or “Mount Zion” referred to a stronghold or fortress that King David captured from the Jebusites. Both these terms became other ways of referring to Jerusalem.

- Mount Zion and Mount Moriah were two of the hills that the city of Jerusalem was located on. Later, “Zion” and “Mount Zion” became used as general terms to refer to both of these mountains and to the city of Jerusalem. Sometimes they also referred to the temple that was located in Jerusalem. (See: [metonymy](#))
- David named Zion, or Jerusalem, the “City of David.” This is different from David’s hometown, Bethlehem, which was also called the City of David.
- The term “Zion” is used in other figurative ways, to refer to Israel or to God’s spiritual kingdom or to the new, heavenly Jerusalem that God will create.

(See also: Abraham, [David](#), [Jerusalem](#), Bethlehem, Jebusites)

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 11:5
- Amos 1:2
- Jeremiah 51:35
- Psalm 76:1-3
- Romans 11:26

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H6726

(Go back to: [Amos 1:2](#); [6:1](#))

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