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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Joshua

Introduction to Joshua

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of the Book of Joshua

Conquest of the land of Canaan (1:1–12:24)

- Preparation for conquest; spies; crossing the Jordan River (1:1–5:1)
- Ceremonies at Gilgal; conquest of Jericho and Ai (5:2–8:29)
- The covenant affirmed at Shechem (8:30–35)
- Southern and central campaigns; northern campaigns (9:1–12:24)

Settlement in the Promised Land; division of the land (13:1–22:34)

Joshua's final days (23:1–24:33)

What is the Book of Joshua about?

The Book of Joshua is about the Israelites entering and occupying the Promised Land. Joshua was the leader that replaced Moses. He led the Israelites as they fought the people living in the Promised Land. This book also tells how the Israelites divided the land among the twelve tribes. (See: **Promised Land (p.783)**)

How should the title of this book be translated?

This book traditionally has the title “Joshua” because Joshua leads the people of Israel after Moses dies. Translators may create a title such as “The Book About When Joshua Led Israel.” Translators should avoid a title that suggests Joshua as the writer of the book.

Who wrote the Book of Joshua?

The book does not tell who wrote it. However, some verses in the book indicate that Joshua may have written at least part of it. Since ancient times, Jews have thought that Joshua wrote most of the book.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How does the Book of Joshua present the cause of historical events?

In the ancient Near East, people assumed that gods caused world events to happen in a certain way. The Book of Joshua has some similarities with this view, but there are important differences. The events in the Book of Joshua occurred because Yahweh promised the Israelites that he would give them the Promised Land. What happened also depended on whether or not the Israelites obeyed Yahweh.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

What does the phrase “to this day” mean?

This phrase was used by the writer to refer to the time when he was writing. The translator should be aware that “to this day” refers to a time already passed. He must avoid giving the impression to readers that “to this day” means “to the present day.” The translator might decide to say “to this day, at the time when this was being

written," or "to this day, at the time of writing." This Hebrew phrase occurs in Joshua 4:9; 6:25; 7:26; 8:28, 29; 10:27; 13:13; 14:14; 15:63; 16:10.

What does the phrase "all Israel" mean?

This phrase appears many times in the Book of Joshua, but it does not always mean every person in the nation of Israel. At times it means the Israelite army. At other times it means the representatives of the twelve tribes of Israel. In still other passages, it probably means a large number of the people in the nation of Israel.

When should Joshua be translated?

The Book of Joshua should probably not be translated before Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. This is because the historical events of Joshua will not be understood without the information in these previous books.

Joshua 1

Joshua 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter appears to be a natural continuation of the book of Deuteronomy.

Special concepts in this chapter

Be strong and Courageous

Joshua is often told, "Be strong and courageous." This repeated encouragement is on purpose and may indicate Joshua will need help in the future.

Joshua 1:1

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.

Nun

Joshua's father (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 1:2

cross over this Jordan

To “cross over” means “go to the opposite bank of the river.” Alternate translation: “travel from this side to the opposite side of the Jordan” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

you and all this people

The word “you” here refers to Joshua. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

Joshua 1:3

Every place on which the sole of your foot will tread, I give it to you

God giving the land to the Israelites in the future is spoken of as if he gave it to them in the past. This emphasizes that he will certainly give it to them. Alternate translation: "I will give to you every place" (See: **Predictive Past (p. 761)**) (See: **Predictive Past (p.761)**)

on & I give it to you

The word "you" refers to both Joshua and the nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p. 719)**)

Every place & which the sole of your foot will tread

This refers to all the places Joshua and the Israelites will travel when they cross the Jordan River. Alternate translation: "everywhere you go in this land" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 1:4

your boundary

The word “your” refers to the tribes of Israel and not only Joshua. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

Joshua 1:5

will & station himself against your face

In verse 5 the words “you” and “your” refer to Joshua. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

I will not abandon you and I will not leave you

The words “abandon” and “leave” mean basically the same thing. Yahweh combines them to emphasize that he will not do these things. Alternate translation: “I will certainly stay with you always” (See: [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-doublet\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-doublenegatives\]\]](#)) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

Joshua 1:6

General Information:

General Information:

Yahweh gives Joshua a series of commands. (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**) (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**)

Be strong and be courageous

Yahweh commands Joshua to overcome his fears with courage. (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**) (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**)

Joshua 1:7

Do not turn aside from it right or left

This can be stated as a positive command. Alternate translation: “Follow it exactly” or “Follow them exactly” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**) (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**)

you may be wise

Alternate translation: “achieve your goal” or “reach your goal”

Joshua 1:8

you will make your ways prosperous and then you will be wise

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize great prosperity. (See: **Doublet (p.713)**) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you

This refers to Yahweh commanding Joshua. Alternate translation: "I have commanded you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Be strong and be courageous

Yahweh is commanding Joshua. (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**) (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.736)**)

Joshua 1:10

the people

This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “the people of Israel” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 1:11

Pass over within the camp and command the people, saying, 'Prepare provisions for yourselves because in yet three days you will be about to cross over this Jordan to enter to possess the land that Yahweh your God is about to give to you to possess it

Embedded quotes can be expressed as indirect quotes. Alternate translation: "Go through the camp and command the people to prepare provisions for themselves. In three days they will cross over this Jordan and go in and possess the land that Yahweh their God is giving them to possess." (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.765)**) (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.765)**)

in yet three days

Here Joshua was counting his present day as day one. Alternate translation: "Two days from now" or "On the day after tomorrow"

will be about to cross over & Jordan

"cross over" refers to going to the opposite side of the river. Alternate translation: "travel to the other side of the Jordan River" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 1:12

General Information:

General Information:

The tribes of Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Manasseh chose to settle east of the Jordan River. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

And to the Reubenite

These were the descendants of Reuben. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and to the Gadite

These were the descendants of Gad. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 1:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 1:14

your little ones

Alternate translation: "your little children"

on the other side of the Jordan

This refers to the east side of the Jordan River. Later most of the Israelites would live west of the Jordan, so they called the east side "beyond the Jordan." But at this time they were all still on the east side. Alternate translation: "east of the Jordan River" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 1:15

when & gives rest to your brothers

This refers to Israel defeating all their enemies residing in Canaan that they were to conquer. (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Then you shall return to the land of your possession and shall possess

This refers to living out their life on the land in peace.

on the other side of the Jordan, the rising place of the sun

This refers to the east side of the Jordan river. (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 1:16

General Information:

General Information:

These Isrelites were specifically the Reubenites, Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh that replied to Joshua.

Joshua 1:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 1:18

rebels against your mouth and will not hear your words

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that any form of disobedience will be punished. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

will be put to death

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: “we will put to death” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

be strong and be courageous

Israel and God considered both traits important for Joshua to pursue as their leader. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

Joshua 2

Joshua 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins the story of the conquest of the Promised Land. (See: **Promised Land (p.783)**)

Special concepts in this chapter

Rahab's faith

Rahab expressed her faith in Yahweh. The statement "for Yahweh your God, he is God in heaven above and on the earth below" is a recognition of her faith. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/faith\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/heaven\]\]](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Metaphor

The Israelites were to completely destroy the evil Canaanites. They are compared to melting snow: "... melting away because of us." (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/evil\]\]](#))

Joshua 2:1

Nun

This is Joshua's father. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the Shittim

This is the name of a place on the east side of the Jordan River. It means "Acacia Trees." (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

spies

These men were to visit the land to gain information on how Israel should conquer the land.

Joshua 2:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 2:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 2:4

General Information:

General Information:

Rahab the prostitute protects the two Israelite spies from harm.

And the woman took the two men and hid them

This happened before the king's messenger spoke to her.

the woman

This refers to Rahab, the prostitute.

Joshua 2:5

at the darkness

This is the time that day begins to change to the darkness of night.

Joshua 2:6

Now she had brought them up to the roof and had hidden them in the flaxes of the stalk arranged by her on the roof

This is background information and explains how she had hidden the men in [Joshua 2:4](#). (See: **Background Information (p.700)**) (See: **Background Information (p.700)**)

to the roof

The roof was flat and strong, so people could walk around on it.

in the flaxes of

a plant that is grown for its fibers, which is used in making cloth

Joshua 2:7

And the men pursued after them

The men pursued the spies because of what Rahab had told them in [Joshua 2:5](#).

the fords

places where a river or other body of water is shallow enough for people to get to the other side by walking through it

Joshua 2:8

before & had laid down

This refers to going to sleep for the night. (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 2:9

I know that Yahweh has given to you the land

The word “you” refers to the all the Israelite people. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

dread of you has fallen on us

Becoming afraid is spoken of as if fear came and attacked them. Alternate translation: “we have become afraid of you” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

have melted from your face

This compares the fearful people to ice melting and flowing away. Possible meanings are 1) they will be weak in the Israelites’ presence or 2) they will be scattered. Alternate translation: “will be so afraid that they will not resist you” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 2:10

the Sea of Reeds

This is another name for the Red Sea.

to Sihon and to Og

These are the names of the Amorite kings. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 2:11

and our hearts have melted and the spirit in a man no longer stands

These two phrases share similar meanings, combined for emphasis. The phrase "our hearts melted" compares the hearts of the fearful people of Jericho to ice melting and flowing away. (See: [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-doublet\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

Joshua 2:12

please swear to me & and will give to me a sign of truth

These are similar statements of Rahab seeking assurance from the spies. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

I am doing kindness with you

The word “you” refers to the two spies. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

Joshua 2:13

and you will keep alive my father & And you will rescue our lives from death

a polite way of saying "do not to kill us" (See: **Euphemism (p.717)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.717)**)

Joshua 2:14

General Information:

General Information:

The Israelite spies make the promise which Rahab asked for in [Joshua 2:12](#)

Our lives in place of yours to death

This idiom is a way of swearing and asking God to curse them if they do not keep their promise. Alternate translation: "If we do not do what we promise, may Yahweh cause us to die" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 2:15

General Information:

General Information:

The Israelite spies continue to talk to Rahab.

Joshua 2:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 2:17

This expresses a condition for the promise the spies had made to Rahab. The word, "this," refers to "tie this scarlet rope in the window" in [Joshua 2:18](#). (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

Joshua 2:18

General Information:

General Information:

The Israelite spies continue talking to Rahab.

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

The Israelite spies clarify the condition they expressed in [Joshua 2:15](#).

Joshua 2:19

anyone who goes out from the doors of

This phrase expresses a condition, creating a hypothetical situation. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

his blood will be on his head

Here “blood” represents a person’s death. To be responsible for their own death is spoken of as if their blood would be on their heads. Alternate translation: “their death will be their own fault” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

and we will be innocent

Alternate translation: “we will be innocent”

on & if a hand should be & him

Here “a hand is laid upon” is a polite way of referring to causing someone injury. Alternate translation: “if we cause injury to any” (See: **Euphemism (p.717)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.717)**)

Joshua 2:20

General Information:

General Information:

The two Israelite spies continue to speak to Rahab about their promise to her. The spies required Rahab to remain silent about their visit or they would be free from their oath to protect her family.

And if you tell

“You” refers to Rahab. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

Joshua 2:21

According to your words, so

Rahab agreed to their terms of the oath to protect her family.

Joshua 2:22

General Information:

General Information:

The two Israelites spies leave Jericho.

the pursuers had returned

It may be helpful to say they returned to Jericho. Alternate translation: “their pursuers returned to the city of Jericho” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

and did not find them

This refers to the men not finding the spies.

Joshua 2:23

And the two men returned

The two men returned back to the Israelite's camp. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)
(See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

And & returned and went down & and crossed over and came

These are similar expressions referring to returning to where the Israelite's are camped. (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)
(See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

and crossed over

"cross over" means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: "traveled from this side to the opposite side of the Jordan" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Nun

This is a male name; the father of Joshua. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

all that was finding them

Alternate translation: "all that the men had experienced and seen."

Joshua 2:24

into our hand

This word, "us," refers to Israel.

those who dwell in the land

The people of the land toward Israel are like a substance that melts in the presence of heat. (See: **Metaphor (p. 741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 3

Joshua 3 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God dries the Jordan River

Joshua told the people “Dedicate yourselves to Yahweh tomorrow, for Yahweh will do wonders among you.” The conquest of the Promised Land is accomplished through the supernatural power of God. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/miracle\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/promisedland\]\]](#))

Joshua 3:1

And & got up early

The phrase, “got up,” means to “awaken.”

from the Shittim

A place in the land of Moab, west of the Jordan River where the Israelites were camped before their entry into the promised land, Canaan.

Joshua 3:2

the officers

These are people holding a position of command or authority.

Joshua 3:3

the people

This is the nation of Israel. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 3:4

of about 2,000 cubits

"2,000 cubits." The word "cubit" is a measurement equaling the distance from the elbow to the finger tips. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-bdistance\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-numbers\]\]](#)) (See: **Biblical Distance (p.703)**)

Joshua 3:5

Consecrate yourselves

This refers to a special preparation of being religiously clean before Yahweh.

Yahweh will do wonders in your midst

Yahweh will be doing miracles for all to see and experience.

Joshua 3:6

Lift up the Box of

This is referring to the levites picking up the ark for the purpose of carrying it from one location to another.

Joshua 3:7

General Information:

General Information:

Yahweh tells Joshua what the priest are to do.

I will begin to make you great in the eyes of all Israel

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: “the people will see what I do and realize that I have made you a great man” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 3:8

the edge of the waters of the Jordan

Joshua is to approach the bank or edge of the Jordan River.

Joshua 3:9

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua tells Israel what Yahweh is about to do

Joshua 3:10

and will surely dispossess from your face

Yahweh will force the other people living on the land to leave or be killed. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 3:11

is about to cross over

“cross over” means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: “will travel from this side to the opposite side” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 3:12

General Information:

General Information:

Just as Israel's fathers experience crossing the Red Sea, these people will experience crossing the Jordan river on dry land.

Joshua 3:13

the soles of the feet of

This refers to the bottom of their feet.

from above

This word refers to the direction the Jordan River water is flowing toward Israel.

And they will stand as one heap

The water will stay in one spot or place. It will not flow around the priests.

Joshua 3:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 3:15

in the edge of the water

This can refer to the surface of the water as well as the bank where the water flows to dry land. (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Now the Jordan was full over all its banks all the days of the harvest

This is background information and it emphasizes the scale of what Yahweh is doing. (See: **Background Information (p.700)**) (See: **Background Information (p.700)**)

Joshua 3:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 3:17

the Jordan

This refers to the Jordan River bed. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

was crossing over

This phrase means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: “traveled from this side to the opposite side” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 4

Joshua 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

God's war

The conquering of the Promised Land was a special war. It was God's war against the people of Canaan and Joshua recognized that they would only be victorious through Yahweh's power. This is why their first act after crossing the Jordan River was to build an altar. This war was a witness to Yahweh's power. (See: **Promised Land (p.783)**)

Joshua 4:1

General Information:

General Information:

Though Yahweh was speaking directly to Joshua, all occurrences of you include Israel. (See: **Pronouns (p.763)**) (See: **Pronouns (p.763)**)

crossing over

The words “crossed over” refer to going to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: “went across” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

the Jordan

the Jordan River (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 4:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 4:3

And command them saying: ‘Lift up for yourselves 12 stones from here, from the midst of the Jordan, from the firm standing place of the feet of the priests. And you shall bring them over with you and you shall rest them in the lodging place in which you will lodge tonight

The nested quote can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: “Give them this command to take up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan where the priests are standing on the dry ground, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you will spend the night tonight” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-quotesinquotes\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-quotations\]\]](#)) (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.765)**)

Joshua 4:4

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua tells the twelve men what to do.

Joshua 4:5

into the midst of the Jordan. And lift up for yourselves, one stone a man upon his shoulder

Each of the twelve men were to pick up a large stone from the Jordan River bed and carry them to the other side to build a monument. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 4:6

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua tells Israel what the pile of twelve stones mean.

Joshua 4:7

the waters of the Jordan were cut off from the face of the Box of the Covenant of Yahweh

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: "Yahweh cut off the waters of the Jordan in front of the ark of his covenant" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

the waters of the Jordan were cut off

Alternate translation: "The Jordan River was"

were cut off from the face of the Box of

The Jordan River was prevented by God from flowing up to the ark that was being carried by the priests.

the waters of the Jordan were cut off

The water flowing down the Jordan River stopped before the ark so everyone including the ark traveled on the dry river bed.

Joshua 4:8

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua and Israel continue to do as Yahweh commanded.

And they lifted up 12 stones from the midst of the Jordan

This refers to the twelve men picking up stones from the middle of the Jordan River bed. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 4:9

And Joshua set up 12 stones in the midst of the Jordan

These were twelve additional stones, not the stones that the twelve men carried from the river bed. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

And they are there until this day

This means the memorial was there to the day that the author was writing this book.

Joshua 4:10

the Jordan

This refers to the Jordan River.

the people

This refers to the nation of Israel. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

and crossed over

This means to go to the opposite bank of the river. Alternate translation: “traveled from one side to the opposite side” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 4:11

before the face of the people

This refers to being in front of the people or in the sight of all the people. Everyone saw the ark being carried by the priests. (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 4:12

And the sons of Reuben, and the sons of Gad, and the half of the tribe of Manasseh, armed men, crossed over before the face of the sons of Israel

These were the soldiers of the 3 tribes that were fulfilling their obligation to lead the Israelites into battle for settling on the East side of the Jordan River. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 4:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 4:14

just as they had feared

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

Joshua 4:15

General Information:

General Information:

Yahweh tells Joshua to have the priests exit the Jordan River.

Joshua 4:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 4:17

General Information:

General Information:

The Author was making it clear that parting the Jordan River was no different than parting the Red Sea for the previous generation.

Joshua 4:18

then the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and went over all its banks, as yesterday and three days ago

The Jordan River was overflowing its banks and flooding the area before and after Israel passed through on dry land.

Joshua 4:19

came up from the Jordan

This refers to when Israel crossed the Jordan River on dry ground.

on ten of the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The tenth day is near the end of March on Western calendars. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-hebrewmonths\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-ordinal!\]\]](#)) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.720)**)

Joshua 4:20

And & these 12 stones that they had taken from the Jordan

Each tribe was to take one stone from the Jordan River so Joshua could build a memorial of the crossing event.
(See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 4:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 4:22

then you shall cause your sons to know

It was for Israel to teach their children of God's miracles so that they would honor Yahweh forever.

Joshua 4:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 4:24

the hand of Yahweh, that it is mighty

This refers to the power of Yahweh being strong. Alternate translation: “Yahweh is mighty” (See: **Metonymy (p. 747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 5

Joshua 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Circumcision

It would have been very unusual to be circumcised in a time of war. When men are circumcised they are unable to move without pain or to defend themselves in battle for several days. (See: **circumcise, circumcised, circumcision, uncircumcised, uncircumcision (p.779)**)

Manna

Yahweh stops providing manna in this chapter and will no longer provide them with their daily allotment of food. This does not mean Yahweh's care and provision will stop.

Joshua 5:1

then their heart melted, and there was no longer a spirit in them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the intensity of their fear. (See: **Parallelism** (p. 756)) (See: **Parallelism** (p.756))

then their heart melted

Here “hearts” refers to their courage. They were so afraid that it was as if their courage melted away like wax in a fire. Alternate translation: “they lost all their courage” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy** (p.747))

and there was no longer a spirit in them

Here “spirit” refers to their will to fight. Alternate translation: “they no longer had any will to fight” (See: **Metonymy** (p.747)) (See: **Metonymy** (p.747))

Joshua 5:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 5:3

And Joshua made for himself knives of flint. And he circumcised the sons of

There were over 600,000 males, so it is understood that while Joshua was in charge of this task, many other people helped him. If this would confuse your readers, you may want to make this explicit. Alternate translation: "Joshua and the Israelites made themselves flint knives ... they circumcised all the males" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

the hill of the foreskins

This is a place name which commemorates Israel rededicating themselves to Yahweh. It means "the hill of the foreskins." (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 5:4

General Information:

General Information:

The reason all the males of Israel had to be circumcised is explained.

the men of war

the men who were old enough to be soldiers

Joshua 5:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 5:6

had & listened to the voice of Yahweh

Here “voice” refers to the things that Yahweh spoke. Alternate translation: “obey the things that Yahweh commanded them” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

a land flowing with milk and honey

God spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants were flowing through the land. Alternate translation: “a land that is excellent for raising livestock and growing crops” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#)) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 5:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 5:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 5:9

Today I have rolled away the disgrace of Egypt from on you

Their disgrace is spoken of as if it were a large stone that blocked their path. Here “rolled away” means “removed.” Alternate translation: “This day I have removed the disgrace of Egypt from you” or “You were disgraced when you were slaves in Egypt. But, today I have caused you to no longer be disgraced” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 5:10

on day 14 of the month

This is near the end of March on Western calendars. Alternate translation: “the fourteenth day of the first month” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-hebrewmonths\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-ordinal\]\]](#) and **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.720)**)

Joshua 5:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 5:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 5:13

that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, a man was standing

Here looking up is spoken of as if Joshua literally lifted his eyes in his hands. Alternate translation: “he looked up and saw that a man was standing” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

and behold

The word “behold” alerts us to pay special attention to new information. Your language may have a way of doing this.

and his drawn sword was in his hand

Here the words “he” and “his” refer to the man who was standing in front of Joshua.

Joshua 5:14

And he said

The word “he” refers to the man Joshua saw.

No

This is the beginning of the man’s answer to Joshua’s question, “Are you for us or for our enemies?” This short answer could be clarified. Alternate translation: “I am neither for you nor for your enemies”

And Joshua fell on his face to the ground and bowed down

This was an act of worship. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.774)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.774)**)

Joshua 5:15

Slip off your sandal from on your foot

This was an act of reverence. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.774)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.774)**)

Joshua 6

Joshua 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh conquers

It was God, not the army, who gave them victory. It is said, "Shout! For Yahweh has given you the city." The circumstances of Israel's victory in the battle for Jericho were very unusual. It was never common to march around a city or to shout in order to win a military battle. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 6:1

And Jericho was

This word is used here to mark a break in the main story line. Here the narrator tells us why the gates of Jericho are closed and locked up.

Joshua 6:2

I have given Jericho into your hand, and its king, the mighty ones of the army

Yahweh is telling Joshua that he will certainly do this by saying that he has already done it. (See: **Predictive Past (p. 761)**) (See: **Predictive Past (p.761)**)

into your hand

The word “hand” is a metonym for the control that the hand exercises. Alternate translation: “so that you can control it” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 6:3

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Joshua what the people must do.

Thus you shall do six days

Alternate translation: "You must do this once each day for six days"

Joshua 6:4

And seven priests shall lift seven horns of rams before the face of the Box

The seven priests are to march in front of other priests who are carrying the ark and marching around the city.

Joshua 6:5

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

God continues telling Joshua what the people must do.

when sounding a blast with the horn of the ram

The word “they” refers to the seven priests. The “ram’s horn” and “trumpet” refer to the trumpets of rams’ horns that the priests were blowing in [Joshua 6:4](#).

the wall of the city

Alternate translation: “the outer wall of the city” or “the wall surrounding the city”

Joshua 6:6

Nun

This is Joshua's father. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Lift the Box of the Covenant

Alternate translation: "Pick up the ark of the covenant"

Joshua 6:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:8

before the face of Yahweh

Possible meanings are 1) "in obedience to Yahweh" or 2) "in front of Yahweh's ark" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

and blew with the horns

Alternate translation: "they sounded the trumpets loudly" or "the priests blew into the ram's horn trumpets"

And the Box of the Covenant of Yahweh was going behind them

It can be stated clearly that there were people carrying the ark. Alternate translation: "The priests who were carrying the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 6:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:10

and you shall not make your voice heard, and a word shall not go out from your mouth

Sound leaving someone's mouth refers to that person's speaking or shouting. Alternate translation: "Do not yell or speak" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

And Joshua commanded the people

Joshua had commanded the people before they started walking around the city. Alternate translation: "Joshua had commanded the people" (See: **Order of Events (p.752)**) (See: **Order of Events (p.752)**)

Joshua 6:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:13

And the seven priests & the seven horns of

"7 priests ... 7 trumpets" (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

and blowing with the horns

This means that they blew into their trumpets, causing them to make loud noises, multiple times. Alternate translation: "continually sounded the trumpets loudly" or "blew into the ram's horn trumpets continually"

Joshua 6:14

on the second day

the next day (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**)

Thus they did

Israel marched around Jericho once every day.

six days

“6 days” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 6:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:16

the people

This refers to the people of Israel.

blew with the horns

Alternate translation: “sounded the trumpets loudly” or “blew into the ram’s horn trumpets”

Yahweh has given to you

Joshua is saying that Yahweh will definitely give them the city by saying that he has already given it to them. (See: **Predictive Past (p.761)**) (See: **Predictive Past (p.761)**)

has given to you

The word “you” refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

Joshua 6:17

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

Joshua continues speaking to the people of Israel.

And the city, it and all that is in it, is a banned thing for Yahweh

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: “You must set apart to Yahweh the city and all that is in it for destruction” or “You must set apart to Yahweh the city and all that is in it by destroying it” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 6:18

keep from the banned thing

Being careful is spoken of as if they are to guard themselves. "Be careful that you do not take the things" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

and trouble it

Doing something that makes bad things to happen to the city is spoken of as bringing trouble on it. Alternate translation: "you will cause bad things to happen to it" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 6:19

the storehouse of Yahweh

a collection of things set apart for the worship of Yahweh

Joshua 6:20

that the people shouted with a great shout

Alternate translation: “the people of Israel shouted”

and they blew with the horns

Alternate translation: “sounded the trumpets loudly” or “blew into the ram’s horn trumpets”

Joshua 6:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 6:24

And they burned & the city

The word “they” refers to the Israelite soldiers. It does not refer only to the two young men who brought Rahab and her family out of the city.

Joshua 6:25

And she has dwelt in the midst of Israel

The word “She” refers to Rahab and represents her descendants. Alternate translation: “Her descendants live in Israel” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

to this day

“now” or “even today.” Rahab’s descendants are still living in Israel as the original writer writes this story.

Joshua 6:26

Cursed is the man before the face of Yahweh who rises up and builds

Being cursed in Yahweh's sight represents being cursed by Yahweh. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh curse the man who rebuilds" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

With his firstborn he will found it

The consequence of a man laying a new foundation for Jericho is that his firstborn son would die. This is spoken of as if it were a cost that the man would pay. Alternate translation: "If he lays the foundation, he will lose his firstborn son" or "If he lays the foundation, his firstborn son will die" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

and with his youngest he will set up its doors

The consequence of a man setting up new gates for Jericho is that his youngest son would die. This is spoken of as if it were a cost that the man would pay. Alternate translation: "If he sets up its gates, he will lose his youngest son" or "If he sets up its gates, his youngest son will die" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 6:27

And the report of him was in all the land

This refers to Joshua's fame, not Yahweh's. Becoming known among the people throughout the land is spoken of as if his fame spread. Alternate translation: "Joshua became famous throughout the land" or "people throughout the land learned about Joshua" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 7

Joshua 7 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Sin brought defeat

It was great sin to take what was to be destroyed. Because of their sin, Yahweh withheld victory from the Israelites. Sin resulted in defeat in battle. (See: **sin, sinful, sinner, sinning (p.784)**)

Joshua 7:1

with the banned thing

Alternate translation: “the things that God had said they must set apart to him by destroying them”

Achan & Karmi & Zabdi & Zerah

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

And the nose of Yahweh burned

“anger” and “burned” indicates intensity, not that fire is present. Alternate translation: “Yahweh’s anger burned like a fire” or “Yahweh was very angry” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 7:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 7:3

all the people

This refers to the army of Israel.

they are few

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

Joshua 7:4

And some from the people went up to there, about 3,000 men

These men were part of the army. Alternate translation: "three thousand men belonging to the army went up"

about 3,000 men

"3,000 men" (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 7:5

about 36 men

"36 men" (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

And the heart of the people melted and became water

These phrases "melted" and "became like water" share similar meanings and are combined to emphasize that the people were extremely afraid. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

And the heart of the people melted

Here the people are represented by their "hearts" to emphasize their emotions. Alternate translation: "The people were very afraid" (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

the heart of the people

The phrase "the people" refers to the Israelite soldiers.

Joshua 7:6

And Joshua tore his garments and fell on his face to the earth before the face of the Box of Yahweh

They did these things to show God how sad and distressed they were. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.774)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.774)**)

Joshua 7:7

Why at all did you bring this people across the Jordan to give us into the hand of the Amorite, to cause us to perish

Joshua was asking if this is the reason God had brought them across the Jordan. Alternate translation: "Did you do it in order to give us into the hands of the Amorites to destroy us?" (See: **Ellipsis (p.715)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.715)**)

into the hand of the Amorite

The hands of the Amorites represents their control and power. Giving the Israelites into their hands to destroy them represents allowing the Amorites to have control of the Israelites and destroy them. Alternate translation: "To allow the Amorites to destroy us?" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

And if only we had been content

The words "If only" show that this is a wish for something that had not happened. Alternate translation: "I wish we had made a different decision"

Joshua 7:8

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua expresses frustration to God.

Please, my Lord! What can I say, after Israel has turned the back of the neck before the face of its enemies

Joshua said this to show how upset he was that he did not even know what to say. Alternate translation: "I do not know what to say. Israel has turned their backs before their enemies!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Israel has turned the back of the neck before the face of its enemies

Doing this represents running away from their enemies. Alternate translation: "Israel has run away from their enemies" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 7:9

and will surround us and cut off our name from the earth

Making people forget the name of the Israelites represents making them forget the Israelites. In this case they would do it by killing the Israelites. Alternate translation: “They will surround us and kill us, and the people of the earth will forget about us” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-explicit\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

for your great name

The phrase “your great name” here represents God’s reputation and power. Alternate translation: “And so what will you do so that people will know that you are great” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

And what will you do for your great name

Joshua uses this question to warn God that if the Israelites are destroyed, then the other people will think that God is not great. Alternate translation: “Then there will be nothing you can do for your great name.” or “Then people will not know that you are great.” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-rquestion\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-explicit\]\]](#)) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Joshua 7:10

General Information:

General Information:

Yahweh tells Joshua why Israel is cursed.

yourself & Why is this—you are falling on your face

God used this question to rebuke Joshua for lying there on his face. Alternate translation: “Stop lying there with your face in the dirt!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Joshua 7:11

the banned thing

These are the things “marked for destruction” from [Joshua 6:18-19](#). Alternate translation: “the cursed things” or “those things which God has cursed”

stolen and also deceived

Hiding their sin represents trying to keep others from knowing that they have sinned. Alternate translation: “They have stolen those things, and then they tried to keep people from knowing that they sinned” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 7:12

And the sons of Israel were not able to stand before the face of their enemies

Standing before their enemies represents fighting successfully against their enemies. Alternate translation: “cannot fight successfully against their enemies” or “cannot defeat their enemies” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

They turned the back of the neck before the face of their enemies

Doing this represents running away from their enemies. Alternate translation: “They ran away from their enemies” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

I will not be with you again

Being with Israel represents helping Israel. Alternate translation: “I will not help you any more” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 7:13

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues speaking to Joshua and tells him what to tell the people.

the people

This refers to the people of Israel.

You will not be able to stand before the face of your enemies

Standing before their enemies represents fighting successfully against them. Alternate translation: "You cannot fight successfully against your enemies" or "You cannot defeat your enemies" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 7:14

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh continues telling Joshua what he must tell the people.

And you shall be brought near in the morning by your tribes

There were twelve tribes that made up the people of Israel. The phrase “by your tribes” means “each tribe.” Alternate translation: “each of your tribes must present themselves to Yahweh” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

the tribe that Yahweh catches shall come near by the clans

The tribe was made up of multiple clans. Alternate translation: “From the tribe that Yahweh selects, each clan will come near” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

the tribe that Yahweh catches

The leaders of Israel would toss lots, and by doing this, they would learn which tribe Yahweh had selected. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: “The tribe that Yahweh selects by lot” or “The tribe that Yahweh selects when we toss lots”

And the clan that Yahweh catches shall come near by the houses

The clan was made up of multiple households. Alternate translation: “From the clan that Yahweh selects, each household must come near” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

And the house that Yahweh catches shall come near by the men

The household was made up of multiple people. Alternate translation: “From the household that Yahweh selects, each person must come near” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 7:15

the one who is caught

This can be stated with an active form. Alternate translation: “the one whom Yahweh selects” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

he has crossed over the covenant of Yahweh

Breaking the covenant represents disobeying it. Alternate translation: “he has disobeyed the covenant of Yahweh” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 7:16

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua follows Yahweh's command to bring Israel before Yahweh.

and brought Israel near by its tribes

The phrase "tribe by tribe" means each tribe. Alternate translation: "brought each tribe of Israel near" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

And the tribe of Judah was caught

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: "Yahweh selected the tribe of Judah" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 7:17

And he brought near the clan of the Zerahite by the men

The phrase “person by person” is an idiom meaning each person. The persons in this sentence were the leaders of their households. Alternate translation: “He brought near each person of the clan of the Zerahites” or “From the clan of the Zerahites, he brought near each man who was the leader of his household” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-idiom\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-explicit\]\]](#)) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

the clan of the Zerahite

The clan was named after the man named Zerah.

Zabdi

This is a man's name. Translate as you did in [Joshua 7:1](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 7:18

Achan & Karmi, & Zabdi, & Zerah

These are men's names. Translate them as you did in [Joshua 7:1](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 7:19

and give thanks to him

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **confession*, you can express the same idea with a verbal form such as “confess.” Alternate translation: “confess to him” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-abstractnouns\]\]](#)) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.692)**)

Do not hide & from me

Hiding information represents trying to keep someone from knowing it. Alternate translation: “Do not try to prevent me from knowing what you have done” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 7:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 7:21

and 200 shekels

This is over two kilograms. (See: **Biblical Weight (p.706)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.706)**)

50 shekels

This is over 500 grams. (See: **Biblical Weight (p.706)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.706)**)

are hidden in the earth

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 hid them in the ground" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 7:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 7:23

And they poured them out

Use the word in your language for pouring many small solid things out of a large bag onto the ground.

Joshua 7:24

to the Valley of Trouble

The name means "Valley of Trouble," but it is best to translate Achor the way it sounds. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 7:25

Why have you troubled us

Joshua uses this question to rebuke Achan. Alternate translation: "You have troubled us" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

And they burned them with the fire and they stoned them with the stones

Possible meanings are 1) the Israelites burned Achan's family to death and then covered them with stones or 2) the Israelites stoned Achan's family to death and then burned the dead bodies or 3) that Achan and his possessions were stoned and then burned.

Joshua 7:26

And Yahweh turned from the burning of his nose

Turning away his anger represents stopping being angry. Burning anger represents strong anger. Alternate translation: "Yahweh stopped being angry" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

until this day

It was still called the valley of Achor at the time the author wrote this. Alternate translation: "even today" or "even now"

Joshua 8

Joshua 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Special concepts in this chapter

Sin brought defeat

It was great sin to take what was to be destroyed. Because of their sin, Yahweh withheld victory from the Israelites. Sin resulted in defeat in battle. Because they repented, Yahweh brought victory to Israel in Ai. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/sin\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/repent\]\]](#))

Built an altar

Altars were commonly built in the Ancient Near East to commemorate important events. Several altars were built in the Book of Joshua.

Joshua 8:1

Do not fear and do not be dismayed

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Yahweh combines them to emphasize that there is no reason to be afraid. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

I have given into your hand the king of the Ai and his people and his city and his land

Giving them into Israel's hand represents giving Israel victory and control over them. Alternate translation: "I have given you victory over the king of Ai and his people, and I have given you control over his city and his land" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

I have given

God speaks of what he promises to do as though he had already done it, because he will certainly do it. Alternate translation: "I will certainly give" or "I am giving" (See: **Predictive Past (p.761)**) (See: **Predictive Past (p.761)**)

Joshua 8:2

and its king

The word “her” refers to the city of Ai. Cities were often spoken of as if they were women. Alternate translation: “its king” or “their king” (See: **Personification (p.759)**) (See: **Personification (p.759)**)

Joshua 8:3

the people of war

Alternate translation: "the army of Israel"

Joshua 8:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:7

And & will give it into your hand

Here “hand” symbolizes the control and power the people have over their enemies. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 8:8

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua finishes explaining the battle plan to his soldiers.

Joshua 8:9

And Joshua sent them

This phrase refers to Joshua sending the thirty thousand men who had been selected to ambush Ai to where they would set the ambush.

the ambush place

Alternate translation: "where they would hide until it was time to attack"

Joshua 8:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:12

about 5,000 men

“5,000 men.” This group seems to be a portion of the “thirty thousand men” ([Joshua 8:9](#)). This smaller group remained in the ambush while the other 25,000 men attacked the city. (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 8:13

General Information:

General Information:

The Israelites prepare to fight the people of Ai.

all the camp

This refers to the largest group of fighting men, those not in the ambush group.

its rear guard

those who were “set in ambush on the west side of the city” ([Joshua 8:12](#))

Joshua 8:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:15

And & let themselves be struck before the face of them

“let themselves be defeated before the people of Ai.” The phrase “before them” represents what the people of Ai would see and think. The phrase “be defeated” can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “let the people of Ai think that the Israelites were defeated” or “let the people of Ai think that they had defeated the Israelites” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-activepassive\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

before the face of them

the army of Ai

And they fled

The army of Israel fled.

Joshua 8:16

And they pursued

These occurrences of “they” refer to the army of Ai.

to pursue after them

to go after the army of Isreal

And all the people who were in the city were summoned

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 city leaders called all the people in the city together” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

all the people who were in the city

The writer speaks in a general way about all the people, but “all the people” refers only to those who could fight. Alternate translation: “all the people in the city who could help chase the army of Israel” (See: **Hyperbole (p.727)**) (See: **Hyperbole (p.727)**)

Joshua 8:17

And they left the city open

Alternate translation: "left the city gates open"

Joshua 8:18

I will give it into your hand

Giving Ai into Israel's hand represents giving Israel victory and control over Ai. Alternate translation: "I will give you victory over Ai" or "I will cause you to capture Ai" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 8:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:24

when Israel had finished slaying all those who dwelled in & and all of them had fallen by the mouth of the sword

The writer uses both of these sentences, which mean almost the same thing, to strongly say that the Israelites had obeyed God's command to kill everyone in Ai. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

and all of them had fallen by the mouth of the sword

Here "fallen" is a euphemism for dying. Also, "the edge of the sword" represents whole swords, and swords represent either battle or the army of Israel. Alternate translation: "had died in battle" or "had died when the army of Israel attacked them" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-euphemism\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Euphemism (p.717)**)

Joshua 8:25

were 12,000

“12,000” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 8:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:28

a desolation

It is a place where people once lived, but now, no one lives there.

Joshua 8:29

until this day

Alternate translation: "today" or "even now"

Joshua 8:30

on Mount Ebal

a mountain in Canaan (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 8:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 8:35

There was not a word from all that Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read

This can be expressed positively. Alternate translation: "Joshua read every word of all that Moses commanded" or "Joshua read the entire law of Moses" (See: **Double Negatives (p.710)**) (See: **Double Negatives (p.710)**)

Israel

This refers to the nation of Israel. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 9

Joshua 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's mistake

Israel was deceived because “they did not consult with Yahweh for guidance.” Instead of consulting Yahweh, they attempted to achieve victory under their own power. This was sinful. (See: **sin, sinful, sinner, sinning (p.784)**)

Joshua 9:1

the Jordan

a shortened name for the Jordan River (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 723)**)

Joshua 9:2

as one mouth

Here "command" represents the one who commanded them. Being under him represents obeying his commands.
Alternate translation: "obeying the commands of one leader" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 9:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:4

with cunning

a crafty scheme intended to trick Joshua and the Israelites

Joshua 9:5

was dry and had become crumbs

Alternate translation: “dry and filled with fungus” or “stale and ruined”

Joshua 9:6

a man of Israel

This refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 9:7

the Hivite

This is another name for the Gibeonites. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Perhaps you are dwelling among us. And how can I cut a covenant for you

Joshua is emphasizing that the people of Israel have to follow the command of Yahweh above all else. Alternate translation: "If you do live near us, we cannot make a covenant with you." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Joshua 9:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:10

to Sihon

This is the name of the defeated Amorite king. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Heshbon

This is the name of the royal city of the nation of Moab. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and to Og

This is the name of the defeated king of Bashan. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

was in Ashtaroth

This is the name of a city known for worshiping the goddess of the same name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 9:11

in your hand

This phrase means “take with you.” Here the word “hand” represents the possession by the Gibeonites of the provisions. (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

to meet them. And you shall say to them

The word “them” refers to the people of Israel.

Joshua 9:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:15

And Joshua made peace for them, and cut a covenant for them to let them live. And the leaders of the congregation swore to them

These two sentences are saying that the same thing occurred. Joshua, the leader of the nation of Israel, promised not to kill the Gibeonites. The leaders of the nation of Israel, likewise, made the same covenant. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

the congregation

Here this refers to the people of Israel. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 9:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:17

on the third day

This refers to number three in order. (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

and Kephirah

This is one of the cities of the Gibeonites. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and Beeroth

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and Kiriath Jearim

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 9:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:19

the congregation

Here this phrase refers to the nation of Israel.

Joshua 9:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:21

And they became cutters of trees and drawers of water

Alternate translation: "the Gibeonites became woodcutters and water carriers"

Joshua 9:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:23

for the house of my God

Here this phrase refers to the dwelling place of Yahweh, the Tabernacle. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 9:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 9:25

as is good and as is right

The words "good" and "right" mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Whatever seems fair and just"
(See: **Doublet (p.713)**) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

Joshua 9:26

to them

The word “them” here refers to the Gibeonites.

Joshua 9:27

until this day

“even up to now.” This means that the people had continued to do these things even up to the day that the writer was living.

Joshua 10

Joshua 10 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULT sets the lines in 10:12-13 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are a poem.

Special concepts in this chapter

“For Yahweh was waging war on behalf of Israel”

Israel's conquest of the Promised Land was Yahweh's war on the ungodly Canaanites more than Israel's war. This type of war was different from other wars and God gave Israel special instructions. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/promisedland\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/godly\]\]](#))

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

The people of Gibeon used an idiom when they called for help from Israel: “Do not withdraw your hands,” meaning “do not stop protecting.” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 10:1

And it happened that

This word is used here to mark a break in the main story line. Here the writer tells about a new person in the story, Adoni-Zedek.

Adoni-Zedek

This is the name of a man who is an important king. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:3

Jarmuth & Lachish & Eglon

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Hoham & Piram & Japhia & Debir

These are the names of kings. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:4

Come up to me

“Travel to where I am.” Jerusalem was higher in elevation than other cities in Canaan.

Joshua 10:5

the five kings of

"5 kings" (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Jarmuth, & Lachish, & Eglon

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

And they camped against

This means they set up their camp around their city. This was a way of weakening those in the city. It prevented people from escaping the city, and it prevented others from bringing food and water to them in the city.

Joshua 10:6

saying

The word “They” here refers to Gibeonites.

Do not let your hand drop from your servants

This humble request is stated with two negatives to emphasize the need for a positive action. Alternate translation: “Please come and use your strength to protect us” (See: **Litotes (p.739)**) (See: **Litotes (p.739)**)

your hand

The word “hands” here refers to the people of Israel’s strength. Alternate translation: “your strength” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 10:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:8

they are given into your hand

Here “hand” represents the people of Israel’s strength and their ability to defeat their enemy. The word “them” refers to the attacking army. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

they are given

Here the word “them” refers to the attacking armies.

Joshua 10:9

And Joshua came to them

The entire army of Israel is referred to here by the name of their commander, Joshua. (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)
(See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 10:10

And Yahweh confused them before the face of Israel

Here "Israel" refers to the entire army of Israel.

to Beth Horon & Azekah & Makkedah

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:11

Beth Horon, & Azekah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

threw large stones on them from the heavens

Alternate translation: "threw large hailstones from the sky"

Joshua 10:12

Sun, be still in Gibeon, and moon, in the Valley of Aijalon

Joshua is praying that Yahweh would make the progression of time stop on this day. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

Sun, & and moon

Joshua commands the sun and moon as if these were people. (See: **Personification (p.759)**) (See: **Personification (p.759)**)

in the Valley of Aijalon

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:13

the nation

This refers to the people of Israel. (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Is it not written in the Book of the Upright

The writer uses this question as background information to remind the reader that the incident is well-documented. Alternate translation: "This is written in The Book of Jashar." (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-rquestion\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/writing-background\]\]](#)) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Joshua 10:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:16

in Makkedah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:17

And it was told to Joshua

Messengers came and told Joshua. Alternate translation: "Someone told Joshua" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)
(See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 10:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:19

into your hand

The phrase “your hand” here means “your control.” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 10:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:21

at Makkedah

Translate the same way as you did in [Joshua 10:10](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

No man sharpened his tongue against the sons of Israel

Alternate translation: “No one dared to say anything against” or “No one dared to complain or protest against”

Joshua 10:22

Open the mouth of the cave

Here "mouth" is an idiom that means "entrance." Alternate translation: "Open the entrance of the cave" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 10:23

Jarmuth, & Lachish, & Eglon

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:24

every man of Israel

Here the men of Israel represent only those who were soldiers. (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 10:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:27

until this same day

Alternate translation: "until the author wrote this story"

Joshua 10:28

Makkedah

This is the name of a city. See how you translated it in [Joshua 10:10](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

He completely destroyed them and all the life that was in it; he did not leave a survivor

The second sentence summarizes the first sentence to emphasize that Joshua left no person or animal alive. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

Joshua 10:29

to Libnah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:31

from Libnah to Lachish

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:32

into the hand of Israel

Here their "hand" represents their control. Alternate translation: "Yahweh gave Lachish into the control of the nation of Israel" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 10:33

Horam

This is the name of a man who is an important king. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Gezer & Lachish

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:34

from Lachish to Eglon

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:35

**and struck it down by the mouth of the sword. And he completely destroyed
all the life that & that**

These two phrases have similar meanings. Together they show the completeness of the destruction of Eglon. (See: **Doublet (p.713)**) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

Joshua 10:36

from Eglon

This is the name of a city. See how you translated this in [Joshua 10:3](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:37

And they captured it and struck it down by the mouth of the sword

The sword represents the army of Israel and striking expresses the idea of slaughter and destruction. Alternate translation: "They captured and killed and destroyed" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 10:38

to Debir

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 10:39

to Debir & to Libnah

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and struck them down by the mouth of the sword

The sword represents the army of Israel and striking expresses the idea of slaughter and destruction. Alternate translation: "They killed and destroyed them" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 10:40

and all their kings. He did not leave a survivor. And he completely destroyed every breathing thing

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize the complete destruction that the people of Israel accomplished at Yahweh's command. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

Joshua 10:41

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 10:42

Joshua captured all these kings and their land

This refers to the kings and lands that were listed beginning in [Joshua 10:28](#).

Joshua captured

Here Joshua represents his whole army. Alternate translation: "Joshua and his soldiers captured" (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

at one time

This does not mean in one day. It means during one military campaign, which may have lasted many days or weeks.

Joshua 10:43

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 11

Joshua 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Yahweh overcomes the united forces of the northern kingdoms

Yahweh said to Joshua, "Do not be afraid in their presence, because tomorrow at this time I am giving them all to Israel as dead men." Even when the kingdoms of Canaan joined forces, they were not able to overcome the power of Yahweh.

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

"Yahweh gave the enemy into the hand of Israel"

This phrase may present difficulties in translation. The translator should ensure that Yahweh receives credit for Israel's victory. (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 11:1

Jabin & Jobab

These are names of kings. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Hazor & Madon & Shimron & Akshaph

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:2

Kinnereth & and in the heights of Dor

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:3

Hermon

This is the name of a mountain. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:4

General Information:

General Information:

All the Canaanite kings attack Joshua and the nation of Israel.

and all their camps with them, many people like the sand that is on the shore of the sea with respect to abundance

No one can count the grains of sand on the seashore. This exaggeration emphasizes the very large number of soldiers that these kings assembled. Alternate translation: “such a great number of soldiers that there appeared to be as many of them as there are grains of sand on the seashore” (See: **Hyperbole (p.727)**) (See: **Hyperbole (p.727)**)

Joshua 11:5

Merom

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:6

I am going to make all of them pierced ones before the face of Israel

Yahweh enabling Israel to conquer the enemy army and kill all of the soldiers is spoken of as if Yahweh killed the soldiers and then gave them to Israel. Alternate translation: "I will enable Israel to kill all of them in battle" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

You will hamstring their horses

"cripple their horses by cutting their legs." This is a practice where the tendons in the backs of the legs are cut so that the horses cannot walk.

Joshua 11:7

Merom

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:8

And Yahweh gave them into the hand of Israel

Here the word "hand" represents power. Yahweh enabling the army of Israel to conquer their enemy is spoken of as if Yahweh had put the enemy army into Israel's hand. Alternate translation: "Yahweh enabled Israel to conquer the enemy" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#)) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

and they struck them down & And they struck them down

Alternate translation: "attacked them ... attacked them"

Misrephoth Maim

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:9

He hamstrung

This is a practice where the tendons in the backs of the legs are cut so that the horses cannot run. See how you translated this word in [Joshua 11:6](#).

Joshua 11:10

struck down its king with the sword

Alternate translation: "Joshua killed the king of Hazor with his sword"

Hazor, it was formerly the head of all these kingdoms

Hazor being the most important city is spoken of as Hazor being the head of the other kingdoms. Alternate translation: Hazor had been the most important of all these kingdoms" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-names\]\]](#)) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 11:11

**And they struck down all the life that was in it by the mouth of the sword,
destroying completely, there was not left any breathing thing**

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize complete destruction. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

destroying completely

The word “he” refers to Joshua and represents himself and his army. Completely destroying every living thing in the city is spoken of as if those living things were dedicated for destruction. Alternate translation: “the army completely destroyed them” (See: [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-synecdoche\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 11:12

and struck them down by the mouth of the sword

Alternate translation: "killed them"

Joshua 11:13

the cities standing on their mounds

Alternate translation: "cities built on small hills"

Joshua 11:14

for themselves

This phrase refers to the army of Israel. (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.768)**) (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.768)**)

every man they struck down by the edge of the sword until they had annihilated them. They did not leave any breathing thing

These two phrases share similar meanings and emphasize complete destruction. (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

Joshua 11:15

He did not remove a thing from all that Yahweh had commanded Moses

This negative phrase emphasizes that Joshua did everything that Yahweh commanded. Alternate translation: "Joshua did everything that Yahweh commanded" (See: **Litotes (p.739)**) (See: **Litotes (p.739)**)

Joshua 11:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 11:17

Mount Halak & Baal Gad

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 11:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 11:20

it was from Yahweh to harden their heart

Yahweh causing the people of the cities to be stubborn is spoken of as if Yahweh had hardened their hearts.

Alternate translation: "it was Yahweh who caused them to act stubbornly" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 11:21

the Anakites

These are the descendants of Anak. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Debir, & Anab

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 11:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 11:23

and Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel

Joshua giving the land to the Israelites is spoken of as if he had given the Israelites an inheritance as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "Joshua gave the land to the Israelites as a permanent possession" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

And the land was at rest from war

The people no longer fighting wars is spoken of as if the land were a person who rested from war. Alternate translation: "the people no longer fought wars in the land" or "there was peace in the land" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-personification\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Personification (p.759)**)

Joshua 12

Joshua 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULT sets the lines in 12:2-5 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are part of a long list.

Joshua 12:1

And these are

This word is used here to mark a break in the main story line. Here the writer begins to provide background information. (See: **Background Information (p.700)**) (See: **Background Information (p.700)**)

And these are the kings of

This refers to the list of kings that continues through verse 24.

the Arabah

These are the names of a region of land. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:2

from Aroer

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Sihon & in Heshbon

See how you translated these words in [Joshua 9:10](#).

Joshua 12:3

the Sea of Kinnereth

This is a place. See how you translated this in [Joshua 11:2](#).

to Beth Jeshimoth, & the Pisgah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:4

Og the king of the Bashan

See how you translated this man's name in [Joshua 9:10](#).

the Rephaites

These are the names of people groups. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

in Ashtaroath and in Edrei

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:5

and in Salekah

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and the Maacathite

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:6

to the Reubenite

These are the descendants of Reuben.

and to the Gadite

These are the descendants of Gad.

and to the half of the tribe of Manasseh

They are called a half tribe because the other half of the tribe received an inheritance in the land of Canaan.

Joshua 12:7

from Baal Gad & Mount Halak

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:8

and in the Arabah

This is the name of a region of land. Translate as in [Joshua 12:1](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 12:10

Hebron

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:11

Jarmuth, & Lachish

These are the names of cities. Translate in the same way you did in [Joshua 10:3](#). (See: **How to Translate Names** (p. 723)) (See: **How to Translate Names** (p.723))

Joshua 12:12

Eglon, & Gezer

These are the names of cities. Translate “Eglon” in the same way you did in [Joshua 10:3](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:13

Debir, & Geder

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:14

Hormah, & Arad

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:15

Libnah, & Adullam

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:16

Makkedah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:17

Tappuah, & Hopher

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:18

Aphek, & Lasharon

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:19

Madon, & Hazor

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:20

Shimron Meron, & Akshaph

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:21

Taanach, & Megiddo

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:22

Kedesh, & Jokneam

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:23

Dor of Naphoth Dor, & the Nations

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 12:24

Tirzah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

All the kings were 31

“31 in all” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 13

Joshua 13 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter begins a section about dividing the land between the tribes of Israel.

Special concepts in this chapter

Division of the land

There was still much land to be captured west of the Jordan River; but the tribe of Reuben, Gad and half of the tribe of Mannasah received their land east of the Jordan. This land had been promised to them in Numbers 32.

Driving out the people

While Yahweh achieved many great victories through Joshua, Israel was still supposed to drive out the rest of the Canaanites. Israel's success in this would depend on their faith in Yahweh. (See: **faith (p.781)**)

Joshua 13:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 13:2

This is the remaining land

You may clarify that this is the land that Israel still needs to capture. Alternate translation: “This is the land that still remains for Israel to capture” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 13:3

Shihor

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

it is counted as Canaanite

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: “which the Canaanites now consider their property” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

and the Avvites

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:4

and a cave & Aphek

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:5

from Baal Gad & Mount Hermon

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the Gebalite

This is the name of a people group who lived in Geba. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:6

Misrephoth Maim

this is the name of a place (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

to Israel as an inheritance

The land that Israel will claim is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they will receive as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 13:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 13:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 13:9

from Aroer, & Medeba & Dibon

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the wadi

a place where the river is far below the land on the sides

the plateau of

flat land high above rivers

Joshua 13:10

in Heshbon

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:11

Salekah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and the territory of the Geshurite and the Maacathite

Alternate translation: "the land where the Geshurites and Maacathites lived"

and the Maacathite

These are the names of people groups. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:12

in Ashtaroath and in Edrei

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the Rephaites

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and Moses struck them down

Here “Moses” represents himself and the Israelite army that Moses led. Alternate translation: “Moses and the Israelites attacked them” (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 13:13

the Geshurite and the Maacathite

These are the names of people groups. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Geshur and Maacath & in the midst of Israel

“Geshur” and “Maacath” are either the names of the ancestors of “the Geshurites” and “the Maacathites” or are the names of the cities in which they lived. Alternate translation: “those people live among Israel” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

to this day

This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote this book.

Joshua 13:14

he did not give an inheritance

The land that Moses assigned to the tribes of Israel is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

The offerings made by fire to Yahweh & they are his inheritance

The writer speaks of the great honor that the Levites had by serving Yahweh as priests as if the offerings were something that they would inherit. Alternate translation: "The offerings of Yahweh ... are what they will have for their provision" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

The offerings made by fire to Yahweh

Alternate translation: "offerings that the people were to bring to Yahweh"

The offerings made by fire

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: "that the priests burned with fire" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 13:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 13:16

from Aroer, & Medeba

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the wadi of & the plateau

See how you translated these words in [Joshua 13:9](#).

Joshua 13:17

Heshbon & Dibon, and Bamoth Baal, and Beth Baal Meon

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:18

and Jahaz, and Kedemoth, and Mephaath

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:19

and Kiriathaim, and Sibmah, and Zereth Shahr

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:20

and Beth Peor, & the Pisgah, and Beth Jeshimoth

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:21

in Heshbon

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Sihon & Evi and Rekem and Zur and Hur and Reba

These are the names of people. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

he and the leaders of Midian

Alternate translation: "as he had defeated the leaders of Midian"

Joshua 13:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 13:23

and the border. This is

The Jordan River was the western border of the land that the tribe of Reuben received.

and the border. This is the inheritance of the sons of Reuben

The land that Moses assigned to the tribe of Reuben is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the tribe of Reuben received as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

according to their clans

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: "that Moses gave to each of their clans" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 13:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 13:25

Jazer & Aroer, & Rabbah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:26

and from Heshbon & Ramath Mizpah and Betonim, and from Mahanaim & Debir

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:27

Beth Haram, and Beth Nimrah, and Succoth, and Zaphon, & Heshbon

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:28

This is the inheritance of the sons of Gad

The land that Moses assigned to the tribe of Gad is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the tribe of Gad received as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 13:29

And Moses gave to the half of the tribe of Manasseh

The land that Moses assigned to the half tribe of Manasseh is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that he gave to them as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

to the half of the tribe of Manasseh

Only half of the tribe received this land because the other half received land on the other side of the Jordan River.

and it was to the half of

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: "Moses assigned it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 13:30

from Mahanaim, & Jair

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:31

and Ashtaroth, and Edrei

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

were for the sons of

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: “Moses assigned these” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Machir

This is a man's name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 13:32

These are what Moses gave as an inheritance

The land that Moses assigned to the tribes of Israel on the east side of the Jordan is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that Moses gave to them as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This is the land that Moses assigned to them as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 13:33

Yahweh the God of Israel, he is their inheritance

The writer speaks of the great honor that the Levites had by serving Yahweh as priests as if Yahweh were something that they would inherit. Alternate translation: "Yahweh, the God of Israel, is what they have" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 14

Joshua 14 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Drive them out

The Israelites were to completely drive out the Canaanites. If they did not drive them out completely, the Canaanites would cause the Israelites to worship other gods. It was sinful to allow the Canaanites to remain in the land. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/falsegod\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/sin\]\]](#))

Joshua 14:1

And these are what the sons of Israel inherited

The land that the people of Israel acquired is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

the fathers of the tribes of

Alternate translation: "leaders of the tribes"

Joshua 14:2

Their inheritance was by lot

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: “Eleazar, Joshua, and the tribal leaders cast lots to determine the inheritance” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

by the hand of Moses

Here the word “hand” refers to Moses himself and means that Yahweh used Moses as the agent to deliver his command. Alternate translation: “through Moses” (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 14:3

For Moses had given the inheritance of the two tribes and the half of the tribe from the other side of the Jordan. But to the Levites he had not given an inheritance in the midst of them

The land that Moses gave to the tribes is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 14:4

And they did not give a portion to the Levites in 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: “And Moses did not give a portion of the inheritance to the Levites in the land” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

a portion

Alternate translation: “part”

but rather cities to dwell in

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: “but he gave to them only certain cities to live in” (See: **Ellipsis (p.715)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.715)**)

and their pasturelands

fields of grass for the livestock to eat

and for their property

physical things they needed so they could provide for their families

Joshua 14:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 14:6

Jephunneh

This is a man's name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the Kenizzite

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 14:7

And I brought back word to him just as was in my heart

Here the word "heart" represents the thoughts. The phrase is an idiom that refers to a report that is given honestly.
Alternate translation: "I brought back to him an honest report" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 14:8

made the heart of the people melt

Making the people very afraid is spoken of as if it were making the hearts of the people melt. Alternate translation: "made the people very afraid" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

But I was fully after Yahweh

Being loyal to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were completely following Yahweh. Alternate translation: "I remained loyal to Yahweh" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 14:9

the land on & will be for an inheritance for you and for your sons until eternity

The land that Caleb and his descendants would have is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they would receive as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

the land & which your foot has trodden

Here “your foot” represents Caleb. Alternate translation: “the land on which you have walked” (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 14:10

behold

Alternate translation: "pay attention, because what I am about to say is both true and important"

when Israel walked in the wilderness

Alternate translation: "while the people of Israel traveled in the wilderness"

Joshua 14:11

As my strength was then, so my strength is now

Alternate translation: "I am still as strong now as I was then"

and for going out, and for coming in

This is an idiom that refers to daily activities. Alternate translation: "for the things I do every day" (See: **Idiom (p. 734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 14:12

hill country

Possible meanings are 1) many large hills or small mountains or 2) one mountain.

the Anakites

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 723)**)

Joshua 14:13

and gave Hebron to Caleb

Hebron is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that Caleb received as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p. 741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 14:14

until this day

This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote this book.

he was fully after Yahweh

Being loyal to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were completely following Yahweh. Alternate translation: “he remained loyal to Yahweh” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 14:15

was Kiriath Arba

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

And the land was at rest from war

The people no longer fighting wars is spoken of as if the land were a person who rested from war. See how you translated this phrase in [Joshua 11:23](#). Alternate translation: "Then the people no longer fought wars in the land" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-personification\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Personification (p.759)**)

Joshua 15

Joshua 15 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Judah. It will be difficult to fully understand their location without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the location of their land. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 15:1

Zin

This is the name of the wilderness area. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 723)**)

Joshua 15:2

from the end of the Sea of Salt, from the tongue turning to the south

“from the bay that faces south at the end of the Salt Sea.” These two phrases refer to the same location. The second phrase clarifies the point at which the southern border begins.

from the tongue turning to the south

Alternate translation: “from the bay that extends to the south” or “from the southern bay”

the tongue

smaller part of the sea that extends into the land

Joshua 15:3

Scorpions & to Zin, & to Hezron, & to Addar, & to the Karka

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:4

to Azmon

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the wadi of Egypt

a small river of water at the southwestern edge of the land, near Egypt (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)
(See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:5

from the end of the Jordan

The point at which the river empties into the sea is spoken of as if it were the mouth of the river. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

And the border & was

Alternate translation: "border ... was"

Joshua 15:6

to Beth Hoglah & to Beth Arabah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

to the stone of Bohan

This was likely a large stone that someone set up as a landmark and named after the man, Bohan. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:7

דְּבַרְהָ מֵעֵמֶק עֵכוֹר & הַגִּלְגָּל & לַמַּעֲלָה אֲדָמִים & מִי־עֵין שֶׁם & עֵין רֵגֵל

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:8

the valley of Ben Hinnom & the valley of the Rephaites

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:9

Nephtoah, & Mount Ephron. & is Kiriath Jearim

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:10

**from Baalah & Mount Seir, & Mount Jearim & is Kesalon), & to Beth Shemesh,
& to Timnah**

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:11

Shikkeron & Mount Baalah, & to Jabneel

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:13

Kiriath Arba

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Kiriath Arba (& the Anak

These are the names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:14

the three sons of the Anak: Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai, the children of the Anak

These names represent clans of people who were descendants of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. The words “sons” and “descendants” in this context mean the same thing. Alternate translation: “the three clans, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, who were descendants of Anak” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

the Anak: Sheshai and Ahiman and Talmai

These are the names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:15

And he went up from there against

Alternate translation: "He went up from there to fight against"

Debir & Kiriath Sepher

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:16

Kiriath Sepher

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Aksah

This is a woman's name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:17

Othniel & Kenaz

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:18

when she came to him

This is an idiom that refers to Aksah becoming Othniel's wife. Alternate translation: "when Aksah became Othniel's wife" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

she incited him to ask for a field from with her father

This can be translated as direct speech. Alternate translation: "she urged him, 'Ask my father to give me a field.'" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.708)**) (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.708)**)

Joshua 15:19

the upper springs and lower springs

The words “upper” and “lower” likely refer to the geographical altitude of the water springs.

Joshua 15:20

This is the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Judah

The land that the tribe of Judah received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land that the tribe of Judah received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 15:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:35

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:36

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:37

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:38

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:39

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:41

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:42

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:43

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:44

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:46

and their villages

villages

Joshua 15:47

the wadi of Egypt

a small river of water at the southwestern edge of the land near Egypt (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)
(See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 15:48

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:49

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:50

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:51

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:52

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:53

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:54

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:55

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:56

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:57

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:58

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:59

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:60

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:61

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:62

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 15:63

until this day

This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote this book.

Joshua 16

Joshua 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Drive them out

The Israelites were to completely drive out the Canaanites. If they did not drive them out completely, the Canaanites would cause the Israelites to worship other gods. It was sinful to allow the Canaanites to remain in the land. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/falsegod\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/sin\]\]](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Ephraim, one of Joseph's sons. It will be difficult to fully understand their location without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the location of their land. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 16:1

for the sons of Joseph

The “tribe of Joseph” consisted of the tribes of Joseph’s two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Since half of the tribe of Manasseh had settled east of the Jordan, this phrase refers to the tribe of Ephraim and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh. Alternate translation: “the tribe of Ephraim and the other half of the tribe of Manasseh” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 16:2

to Luz & at Ataroth

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the Arkites

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 16:3

the Japhletite

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Lower Beth Horon, & Gezer

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 16:4

the sons of Joseph, Manasseh and Ephraim

Alternate translation: "the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim, the sons of Joseph"

And & received an inheritance

The land that the tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "received this land as their inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 16:5

the border of the sons of Ephraim & according to their clans

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 territory ... that Joshua assigned to their clans” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Ataroth Addar & Upper Beth Horon

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 16:6

the Mikmethath & at Taanath Shiloh & to Janoah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 16:7

from Janoah to Ataroth and Naarah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 16:8

From Tappuah & Kanah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Ephraim, according to their clans

The land that Ephraim possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land that the tribe of Ephraim received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

according to their clans

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: "which Joshua assigned to their clans" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 16:9

and the cities that were set apart

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 cities that Joshua had chosen” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Manasseh

The land that the tribe of Manasseh possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: “within the land that the tribe of Manasseh had received as an inheritance” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 16:10

until this day

This refers to the period of time in which the author wrote this book.

and he has become a forced laborer who serves

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 Israelites forced these people to work as slaves” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 17

Joshua 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Manasseh's lack of faith

Even though they were one of the largest and most powerful tribes of Israel, the tribe of Manasseh lacked faith in the power of Yahweh. This caused them many problems. It would also cause their descendants many problems. (See: **faith (p.781)**)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Manasseh, one of Joseph's sons. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 17:1

for Makir

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

And the Gilead and the Bashan were given to him

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: "Joshua assigned the land of Gilead and Bashan to Makir's descendants" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 17:2

Abiezer & Helek & Asriel & Shechem & Hephher & Shemida

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

And it was

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: "Joshua assigned land ... and gave them to their clans" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 17:3

מַחֲלָה וְנוֹחַ וְהוֹגְלָה וְמִלְכָּה וְתִרְזָח

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Mahlah and Noah, Hoglah, Milkah and Tirzah

These are women's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 17:4

Eleazar

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

to give to us an inheritance

The land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the people received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "to give to us some land as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

And he gave to them an inheritance

Possible meanings are 1) "Joshua gave those women an inheritance" or 2) "Eleazar gave those women an inheritance."

Joshua 17:5

And ten measured portions of Manasseh fell

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: "Joshua assigned ten parcels of land" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

ten measured portions of

Alternate translation: "Ten portions"

Joshua 17:6

inherited an inheritance

The land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "received land as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

the Gilead was for the & sons of

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: "Joshua assigned the land of Gilead" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 17:7

to the right

toward the south

to the Mikmethath, & Tappuah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 17:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 17:9

the border

Alternate translation: "The border of Manasseh's land"

to the wadi of

a very small river

Kanah

name of a brook (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 17:10

And it meets with Asher from the north

Possible meanings are 1) that the border of Manasseh's land on the north side touched the land that belonged to the tribe of Asher or 2) that one can travel north to reach Asher. Alternate translation: "Asher was on the north side" or "One can travel north to reach Asher" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

and with Issachar from the sunrise

The verb may be supplied from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: "to the east, one can reach Issachar" (See: **Ellipsis (p.715)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.715)**)

Joshua 17:11

Beth Shan & and Ibleam & Dor & En Dor & Taanach & Megiddo & Napheth

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 17:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 17:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 17:14

the sons of Joseph

This refers to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Why have you given to me one lot and one measured portion as an inheritance, and I am a numerous people, Yahweh has blessed me until up to now

The people of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh ask this question to emphasize that Joshua should have assigned to them more land. Alternate translation: "You should have given us more than one ... Yahweh has blessed us." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

one lot and one measured portion

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. In the second, the land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the people received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "one assignment of land as our inheritance" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-doublet\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

and & measured portion

part

am a numerous people, & until

Alternate translation: "many people"

Joshua 17:15

If you are a numerous people

Alternate translation: "Since you are a people great in number"

and the Rephaites

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 723)**)

Joshua 17:16

are in Beth Shan & Jezreel

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 17:17

the house of Joseph

Here the word "house" refers to the descendants. Alternate translation: "the descendants of Joseph" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 17:18

and you will clear it

Alternate translation: “you will clear the forest of trees” or “you will cut down its trees”

Joshua 18

Joshua 18 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribes of Israel. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 18:1

And the land was subdued before their face

They had conquered the people who lived in the land before they set up the tent of meeting. Alternate translation: "after they had conquered the land" (See: **Order of Events (p.752)**) (See: **Order of Events (p.752)**)

Joshua 18:2

that had not apportioned their inheritance

The land that the tribes would receive is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they would receive as a permanent possession. 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: “to whom Joshua had not assigned land as an inheritance” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-activepassive\]\]](#)) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 18:3

Until when will you be showing yourselves slack to enter to possess the land that Yahweh the God of your fathers has given to you

Joshua asks this question in order to encourage the Israelites to take possession of the land. Alternate translation: "For long enough, you have put off ... has given you." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Joshua 18:4

and walk about in the land

The words “up and down” mean in every direction. Alternate translation: “the land in every direction” or “throughout the land” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

and write it down according to the mouth of their inheritance

This means that they will describe the portions of land that each tribe would like to receive for an inheritance.

their inheritance

The land that they are to survey is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that each of the tribes would receive as a permanent possession. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 18:5

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua is continuing his speech to the children of Israel.

And they will apportion it among themselves

Alternate translation: "They will divide the land"

Judah will stand

Alternate translation: "The tribe of Judah will remain"

and the house of Joseph

Here the word "house" represents the descendants of Joseph. The phrase refers to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Alternate translation: "the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-explicit\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 18:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 18:7

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua is continuing his speech to the children of Israel.

there is no portion

Alternate translation: "no portion of land"

because the priesthood of Yahweh is their inheritance

Joshua speaks of the great honor that the Levites have by serving Yahweh as priests as if it were something that they inherited. Alternate translation: "for the priesthood of Yahweh is what they have" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

and the half of the tribe of Manasseh

Alternate translation: "half of the tribe of Manasseh"

have received their inheritance

The land that the tribes received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "have received land as their inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 18:8

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua speaks to the twenty-one men who were to go look at the land.

and walk about in the land

The words “up and down” mean in every direction. See how you translated this in [Joshua 18:4](#). Alternate translation: “in every direction in the land” or “throughout the land” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 18:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 18:10

according to their portions

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: “to each tribe Joshua gave their portion in the land” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 18:11

between the sons of Judah and the sons of Joseph

Alternate translation: "between the land that belonged to the descendants of Judah and the land that belonged to the descendants of Joseph"

the sons of Joseph

This refers to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)
(See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 18:12

Beth Aven

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:13

Luz & is Bethel). & to Ataroth Addar, & of & Beth Horon

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:14

the border

This refers to the same thing as “the border” in verse 13.

Kiriath Baal (& is Kiriath Jearim

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:15

Kiriath Jearim. & Nephtoah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:16

Ben Hinnom, & the Rephaites & Hinnom & En Rogel

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:17

to En Shemesh & Geliloth, & Adummim

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

to the stone of Bohan

This was likely a large stone that someone set up as a landmark and named after the man, Bohan. See how you translated this in [Joshua 15:6](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:18

the shoulder of the front of the Arabah

Land that is in the form of a slope or ridge is spoken of as if it were a shoulder. Alternate translation: “the slope of Beth Arabah” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

the front of the Arabah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:19

the shoulder of Beth Hoglah to the north

Land that is in the form of a slope or ridge is spoken of as if it were a shoulder. Alternate translation: “the north slope of Beth Hoglah” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Beth Hoglah

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:20

This was the inheritance of the sons of Benjamin

The land that the tribe of Benjamin received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land that the tribe of Benjamin received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

according to their clans

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: "Joshua gave it to each of their clans" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 18:21

General Information:

General Information:

The writer lists the cities that were in the land that the tribe of Benjamin received as an inheritance. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 18:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 18:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 18:24

and their villages

Alternate translation: “the villages around them”

Joshua 18:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 18:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 18:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 18:28

This was the inheritance of the sons of Benjamin

The land and cities that the tribe of Benjamin received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Benjamin received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19

Joshua 19 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribes of Israel. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 19:1

And the second lot went out for Simeon

Alternate translation: "The second time Joshua cast lots, the lot indicated the tribe of Simeon"

second

number two in a list (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**)

according to their clans

Alternate translation: "and Joshua assigned the land to each of their clans"

And their inheritance was in the midst of the inheritance of the sons of Judah

The land is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that the tribes received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "The land that they received as an inheritance was in the middle of the land that the tribe of Judah received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:2

General Information:

General Information:

The writer lists cities that were in the land that the tribe of Simeon received as an inheritance. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

And with their inheritance for them was

The land and cities that the tribe of Simeon received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "They had the following cities for their inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 19:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 19:5

and Ziklag

See how you translated the name of this city in [Joshua 15:31](#).

Joshua 19:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 19:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 19:8

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Simeon

The land and cities that the tribe of Simeon received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Simeon received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

according to their clans

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: "which Joshua gave to their clans" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Joshua 19:9

Some of the measured portion of the sons of Judah

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 portion of land which Joshua assigned to the tribe of Judah” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

in the midst of their inheritance

Alternate translation: “the middle of Judah’s portion of land”

Joshua 19:10

And the third lot went up

See how you translated this phrase in [Joshua 19:1](#).

third

number three in a list (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**)

Sarid

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:11

and Maralah & with Dabbesheth & Jokneam

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

is on the face of Jokneam

Alternate translation: "across from Jokneam"

Joshua 19:12

from Sarid & Kisloth Tabor. & the Daberath & Japhia

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:13

to Gath Hepher, to Eth Kazin. & to Rimmon, & toward Neah

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:14

Hannathon (& Iphtah El

These are names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:15

and Kattath and Nahalal and Shimron and Idalah and Bethlehem

These are names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and Bethlehem

This is not the same “Bethlehem” that is south of Jerusalem in Judah. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:16

This was the inheritance of the sons of Zebulun

The land and cities that the tribe of Zebulun received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Zebulun received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:17

The fourth lot went out

See how you translated this phrase in [Joshua 19:1](#).

fourth

number four in a list (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**)

Joshua 19:18

and the Chesulloth and Shunem

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:19

and Hapharaim and Shion and Anaharath

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:20

and the Rabbith and Kishion and Ebez

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:21

and Remeth and En Gannim and En Haddah and Beth Pazzez

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:22

with Tabor

This is the name of a mountain. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and Shahazumah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:23

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Issachar

The land and cities that the tribe of Issachar received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Issachar received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:24

And the fifth lot went out

See how you translated this phrase in [Joshua 19:1](#).

fifth

number five in a list (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**)

Joshua 19:25

Helkath and Hali and Beten and Akshaph

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:26

and Allammelek and Amad and Mishall. & and with Shihor Libnath

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:27

to Beth Dagon & and with the valley of Iphtah El & Beth Emek, and Neiel. & Kabul

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:28

and Abdon and Rehob and Hammon and Kanah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:29

to Hosah, & Akzib

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:30

and Ummah and Aphek and Rehob

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:31

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Asher

The land and cities that the tribe of Asher received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Asher received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:32

The sixth lot went out

See how you translated this phrase in [Joshua 19:1](#).

sixth

number six in a list (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**)

Joshua 19:33

from Heleph, & in Zaanannim and Adami Nekeb and Jabneel, & Lakkum

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:34

to Aznoth Tabor & to Hukkok

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:35

the Ziddim, Zer and Hammath, Rakkath and Kinnereth

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and Hammath

This is not the same location as “Hamath,” but is located on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee.

Joshua 19:36

and Adamah and the Ramah and Hazor

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:37

and Kedesh and Edrei and En Hazor

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:38

and Yiron and Migdal El, Horem and Beth Anath and Beth Shemesh

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:39

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Naphtali

The land and cities that the tribe of Naphtali received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Naphtali received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:40

The seventh lot went out

See how you translated this phrase in [Joshua 19:1](#).

seventh

number seven in a list (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.754)**)

Joshua 19:41

the border of their inheritance

The land that the tribe of Dan received is spoken of as if it was an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "The territory of land that the tribe of Dan received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Zorah and Eshtaol and Ir Shemesh

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:42

and Shaalabbin and Aijalon and Ithlah

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:43

and Elon and Timnah and Ekron

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:44

and Eltekeh and Gibbethon and Baalath

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:45

and Jehud and Bene Berak and Gath Rimmon

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:46

and the waters of the Jarkon and the Rakkon

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

in front of Joppa

Alternate translation: “opposite Joppa” or “beside Joppa”

Joshua 19:47

Leshem

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:48

This was the inheritance of the tribe of the sons of Dan

The land and cities that the tribe of Dan received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "This was the land and the cities that the tribe of Dan received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:49

And the sons of Israel gave an inheritance to Joshua the son of Nun in the midst of them

The city that Joshua received is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that he received as a permanent possession.
Alternate translation: "gave a city within their own land as an inheritance to Joshua son of Nun" (See: **Metaphor (p. 741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 19:50

Timnath Serah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 19:51

These are the inheritances that & apportioned as an inheritance

The land and cities that the various tribes received are spoken of as if they were an inheritance that they received as a permanent possession. Alternate translation: "These are the portions of land and the cities ... assigned as inheritances" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 20

Joshua 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Cities of Refuge

If a person was killed, it was the duty of his relatives to kill the killer. If the death was an accident, this would be unfair. Therefore, God told the Israelites to make cities of refuge for a person who killed someone accidentally. In the city where he sought refuge, his case would be solved legally: "Do this so that one who unintentionally kills a person can go there. These cities will be a place of refuge from anyone who seeks to avenge the blood of a person who was killed." (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/refuge\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/avenge\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/blood\]\]](#))

Joshua 20:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 20:2

by the hand of Moses

Here “hand of Moses” refers to the scriptures that Moses wrote down. Alternate translation: “through the things that Moses wrote” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 20:3

who strikes down a person by mistake

This happens when a person accidentally kills another person, without intending to do so.

from the avenger of blood

Here the shed blood of a person represents their death. 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: “avenge a person’s death” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-activepassive\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 20:4

And he shall flee

Here the word “he” refers to the person who unintentionally killed someone.

and speak his words in the ears of the elders of that city

“convince the elders of that city that he had not intentionally killed the person.

And they shall gather him

The word “they” refers to the elders and “him” refers to the person who unintentionally killed someone.

and he shall dwell with them

This refers to the city as a whole, not to the elders only.

Joshua 20:5

the avenger of blood

Here the shed blood of a person represents their death. 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. See how you translated this in [Joshua 20:3](#). Alternate translation: “avenge a person’s death” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-activepassive\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

without knowledge he struck down his neighbor

accidentally killed his neighbor

Joshua 20:6

he stands before the face of the congregation

This is a phrase that describes standing to seek justice from a court of the assembly of his fellow citizens.

Joshua 20:7

General Information:

General Information:

There are a lot of names in this section. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 723)**)

Joshua 20:8

of the Jordan

This is a short name for the Jordan River.

Joshua 20:9

and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood

Here “by the hand” is an idiom that means to be the specific cause of something. Alternate translation: “would not be killed by the one” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

the avenger of blood

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. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Joshua 20:3](#). Alternate translation: “avenge a person’s death” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-activepassive\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 21

Joshua 21 General Notes

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

This chapter is about the land given to the tribe of Levi. Even though they did not receive a large piece of land like the other tribes, they did receive small pieces of land to live on and for their animals. It will be difficult to fully understand their locations without a map. Further research may be needed to understand the locations of their land. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.697)**)

Joshua 21:1

Eleazar & Nun

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:2

And they spoke to them

Alternate translation: "The Levites said to them"

Yahweh commanded by the hand of Moses

The phrase "by the hand of" is an idiom that means that Yahweh used Moses to deliver his command. Alternate translation: "Yahweh told Moses to command you" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 21:3

cities

This refers to the cities to be listed in the next verses.

Joshua 21:4

And the lot went out

A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in [Joshua 19:1](#).

the Kohathites

This priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:5

and from the half of

Half the tribe because the other half received their inheritance before crossing the Jordan River.

Joshua 21:6

Gershon

Gershon was one of the sons of Levi. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 723)**)

by the lot

A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in [Joshua 19:1](#).

Joshua 21:7

Merari

Merari was one of the sons of Levi. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:8

Yahweh had commanded by the hand of Moses

The phrase “by the hand of” here means that Yahweh used Moses as the agent to deliver his command. Alternate translation: “Yahweh had told Moses to command” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 21:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 21:10

from the clans of the Kohathites

The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson. See how you translated this in [Joshua 21:2](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the & lot

A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in [Joshua 19:1](#).

Joshua 21:11

Kiriath Arba, the father of the Anak

This is background information about the name of the man who founded the city of Kiriath Arba. (See: **Background Information (p.700)**) (See: **Background Information (p.700)**)

the Anak

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

in the hill country of

An area of land with natural elevations, smaller than mountains.

its pasturelands

An area covered with grass or plants suitable for the grazing of livestock or cattle.

Joshua 21:12

the field of the city

Areas of open land, usually, planted with crops, belonging to and surrounding the city.

its villages

Small communities, usually smaller than a town.

Joshua 21:13

Libnah

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:14

Jattir & Eshtemoa

These are all names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:15

Holon & Debir

These are all names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:16

Ain & Juttah

These are all names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:17

And from the tribe of Benjamin were

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 tribe of Benjamin gave Gibeon" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Geba

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:18

Anathoth & Almon

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:19

13 cities

“13 cities” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 21:20

And for the clans of the sons of Kohath

The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

were the cities of their lot

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 received cities" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

their lot

A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader's will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in [Joshua 19:1](#).

Joshua 21:21

Gezer

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:22

Kibzaim & Beth Horon

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

four cities

This refers to the list by the total number. (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 21:23

And from the tribe of Dan were

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 tribe of Dan gave to the clan of Kohath Eltekeh” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Eltekeh & Gibbethon

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:24

Aijalon & Gath Rimmon

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

four cities

This refers to the number of cities. (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 21:25

And from the half of the tribe of Manasseh were Taanach

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 half tribe of Manasseh gave to the clan of Kohath Taanach” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Taanach & Gath Rimmon

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:26

were for & clans of the sons of Kohath

The priests in this group were descendants of Levi's son Kohath. A portion of them were also descendants of Aaron, Kohath's grandson. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:27

אֶת־גִּזְלָן & אֶת־בְּעִשְׂתָּרָה

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

the one who kills

This refers to a death resulting from an action not intended to harm a person.

two cities

number of cities (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 21:28

Kishion & Daberath

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:29

Jarmuth & En Gannim

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:30

And from the tribe of Asher were Mishal

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 received from the tribe of Asher Mishal” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

אֶת־מִשָּׁאֵל & אֶת־עֵבְדֹו

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:31

Helkath & Rehob

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:32

Hammoth Dor & Kartan

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:33

13 cities

“13 cities in total” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 21:34

And for the clans of the sons of Merari, the remaining Levites, from with the tribe of Zebulun were Jokneam

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 rest of the Levites—the clans of Merari—received from the tribe of Zebulun Jokneam” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

Merari

This is a man’s name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Jokneam & Kartah

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:35

Dimnah & Nahalal

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:36

Bezer & and Jahaz

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:37

four cities

This refers to the total number of cities. (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Kedemoth & Mephaath

names of cities (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:38

Ramoth & Mahanaim

These are the names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:39

Heshbon & Jazer

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 21:40

12 cities

“12 cities in total” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

were 12 cities by their lot

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 received these twelve cities by the casting of lots” (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

by their lot

A random method of choosing to remove the choice from the leader’s will, often done with the idea that God will decide the outcome. See how you translated this in [Joshua 19:1](#).

Joshua 21:41

All the cities of the Levites in the midst of the possession of the sons of Israel were

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 Levites received their cities from the middle of the land" (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.694)**)

48 cities

"48 cities" (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 21:42

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 21:43

he had sworn

Alternate translation: "he gave an oath"

Joshua 21:44

And a man did not stand against their face from & their enemies. & all

This is stated in a negative way to strengthen the statement. Alternate translation: "They defeated every one of their enemies" (See: **Litotes (p.739)**) (See: **Litotes (p.739)**)

all & Yahweh gave & their enemies into their hand

Here "into their hand" means "into their power." Alternate translation: "gave them power to defeat all their enemies" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 21:45

A word did not fall from every good word that Yahweh had spoken to the house of Israel

This is stated in a negative way to strengthen the statement. Alternate translation: "Every one of the good promises that Yahweh had spoken to the house of Israel came true" (See: **Litotes (p.739)**) (See: **Litotes (p.739)**)

Joshua 22

Joshua 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The division of the land is completed in this chapter. Additionally, the soldiers who received land on the east side of the Jordan River were released to go home.

Special concepts in this chapter

The tribes east of the Jordan River build a monument

The tribes east of the Jordan River said, "Let us now build an altar, not for burnt offerings nor for any sacrifices, but to be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we will perform the service of Yahweh before him, with our burnt offerings and with our sacrifices and with our peace offerings, so that your children will never say to our children in time to come, 'You have no share in Yahweh.'" They went home even though the Israelites had not fully conquered the land.

Joshua 22:1

to the Reubenite

people of the tribe of Reuben (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

and to the Gadite

people of the tribe of Gad (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 22:2

And you have listened to my voice

Here “my voice” refers to the things that Joshua had said. Alternate translation: “obeyed everything I said” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 22:3

You have not forsaken your brothers

This can be stated in a positive way. Alternate translation: "You have remained with your brothers" (See: **Litotes (p. 739)**) (See: **Litotes (p.739)**)

Joshua 22:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:5

and to walk in all his ways

A person obeying Yahweh is spoken of as if he were walking on Yahweh's ways or roads. Alternate translation: "to obey everything he says" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

with all your heart and with all your self

The terms "heart" and "soul" are here used together to refer to the entire person. Alternate translation: "with all you think and feel" or "with your entire being" (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.776)**)

Joshua 22:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:7

the Jordan

This was a short name for the Jordan River.

Joshua 22:8

and with iron

a strong, hard, magnetic metal

the spoil of

The winning army would take everything of value from the people they conquered.

Joshua 22:9

the mouth of Yahweh by the hand of Moses

The phrase “by the hand of” is an idiom that means that Yahweh used Moses to deliver his command. Alternate translation: “the commandment that Yahweh told Moses to give to you” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 22:10

the Jordan

This was a short name for the Jordan River.

Joshua 22:11

the front of the land of Canaan, at

The Israelite tribes who lived across the Jordan River would enter Canaan at the place where they built the altar. This place is spoken of as if it was the “front” or “entrance” to Canaan where the other tribes lived. Alternate translation: “at the entrance to the land of Canaan” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

the territories of

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 22:12

for war

a state of armed conflict between two nations or people groups

Joshua 22:13

Eleazar

name of man (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 22:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:16

Thus says all the congregation of Yahweh

All the people of Israel are spoken of together in the singular as if they were one person. Alternate translation: "All the other Israelites are asking"

Joshua 22:17

Was the iniquity of Peor little for us, it from which we have not purified ourselves until this day

This question emphasizes how serious their previous sin was. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "We had already sinned terribly at Peor!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Peor

This is name of a place. Translate the same way as in [Joshua 13:20](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

it from which we have not purified ourselves

This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "we are still dealing with the guilt of that sin" (See: **Litotes (p.739)**) (See: **Litotes (p.739)**)

Joshua 22:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:20

Achan & Zerah

names of men (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Did not Achan the son of Zerah act unfaithfully in unfaithfulness with the banned thing

These questions are used to remind the people of the punishment for past sins. These questions can be written as statements. Alternate translation: "Achan son of Zerah sinned by taking things that had been reserved for God. And because of that God punished all the people of Israel!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Joshua 22:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:22

If it was in rebellion or if in unfaithfulness against Yahweh, do not save us this day

The three tribes are making a hypothetical statement that they insist is not true. They did not build the altar in rebellion or breach of faith. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

Joshua 22:23

If it was to build an altar for ourselves to turn from after Yahweh, or if to offer on it burnt up offerings or grain offerings or if to make on it the sacrifices of peace offerings, Yahweh himself will seek out

The three tribes are making a hypothetical statement that they insist is not true. They did not build the altar to worship another god. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

Joshua 22:24

General Information:

General Information:

The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh now give their answer.

your sons might say to our sons, saying, “What is for you and for Yahweh, the God of Israel

This is a hypothetical accusation that the three tribes think the children of the other tribes may make sometime in the future. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

What is for you and for Yahweh, the God of Israel

The three tribes use this rhetorical question to emphasize the situation they are trying to avoid. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: “You have nothing to do with Yahweh, the God of Israel!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.771)**)

Joshua 22:25

General Information:

General Information:

The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh continue their answer.

And Yahweh has given a border between us and between you sons of Reuben and sons of Gad, the Jordan. There is no portion for you in Yahweh

This is the continuation of the hypothetical accusation that the three tribes think the children of the other tribes may make sometime in the future. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

the Jordan

This is a short name for the Jordan River.

And your sons might make our sons cease so that they are not fearing Yahweh

The three tribes built the altar to avoid this hypothetical situation from happening in the future. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

Joshua 22:26

General Information:

General Information:

The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh now give their answer.

Joshua 22:27

it will be a witness between us and between you

The altar is spoken of as if it were a witness that could testify to the rights of the three tribes. (See: **Metaphor (p. 741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

And your sons will not say to our sons tomorrow, "There is no portion for you in Yahweh

This is the hypothetical situation that the three tribes did not want to happen. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p. 731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

There is no portion for you

Alternate translation: "no portion" or "no inheritance"

Joshua 22:28

General Information:

General Information:

The tribes of Reuben, Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh now finish their answer.

And it will happen if they speak to us or to our generations of tomorrow, that we will say, “See the copy of the altar of Yahweh, which our fathers made, not for a burnt up offering and not for a sacrifice, but it is a witness between us and between you

The three tribes are describing their potential answer to an accusation that might or might not be made at a future time. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.731)**)

Joshua 22:29

May it be far from us for us to rebel

The unlikely chance that they would rebel is spoken of as if it is something that is a great distance away from them. Alternate translation: "We would certainly not rebel" (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

and turn today from after Yahweh

To stop following Yahweh is spoken of as if they were turning away from him. Alternate translation: "stop following him" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 22:30

And & heard the words

Alternate translation: "heard the message"

And it was good in their eyes

Here "in their eyes" means "in their opinion." (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

Joshua 22:31

you have not acted unfaithfully in this unfaithfulness against Yahweh

Alternate translation: "broken your promise to him"

you have rescued the sons of Israel from the hand of Yahweh

Here "the hand of Yahweh" refers to his punishment. Protecting the people is spoken of as rescuing them from his hand. Alternate translation: "you have kept Yahweh from punishing us" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 22:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 22:33

And the word was good in the eyes of the sons of Israel

Here "good in the eyes" means "accepted." Alternate translation: "The people accepted the report of the leaders"
(See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

to destroy the land

Alternate translation: "destroy everything in the land"

Joshua 22:34

it is a witness between us

The altar is spoken of as if it were a witness that could testify for the three tribes. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 23

Joshua 23 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Joshua's final words to Israel (Joshua 23-24)

"Do not marry with the heathen people but drive them out." ##### Drive them out The Israelites were to completely drive out the Canaanites. If they did not drive them out completely, the Canaanites would cause the Israelites to worship other gods. It was sinful to allow the Canaanites to remain in the land because if the Israelites married the Canaanites, the Canaanites would cause them to worship other gods. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/falsegod\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/sin\]\]](#))

Joshua 23:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 23:2

old, I have come into the days

This doublet can be translated as “very old.” (See: **Doublet (p.713)**) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

Joshua 23:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 23:4

the Jordan

This is a short name for the Jordan River.

from the going of the sun

This indicates the direction of the setting sun.

Joshua 23:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 23:6

to not turn aside from it right or left

Disobeying the commands of the law of Moses is spoken of as turning to the right or to the left away from a path.
(See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 23:7

to not go among these nations

Possible meanings are 1) having close friendship with them or 2) intermarrying with them.

you shall & mention

to speak of

their gods

This refers to the gods of the remaining nations.

Joshua 23:8

to Yahweh your God you shall cling

“hold tightly to Yahweh.” Believing in Yahweh is spoken of as if they were holding tightly onto him. Alternate translation: “continue to believe in Yahweh” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

until this day

Alternate translation: “until the present time”

Joshua 23:9

a man has not stood against your face

Here “stand” represents holding ground in a battle. The word “you” refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metonymy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-you\]\]](#)) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 23:10

One

only one

a thousand

"1,000" (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 23:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 23:12

and cling to the remainder of these nations

Accepting the beliefs of these nations is spoken of as holding tightly to them. Alternate translation: “accept the beliefs of the survivors of these nations” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 23:13

as a trap and as a snare

The words “snare” and “trap” mean basically the same thing. Together they speak of the other nations as if they were a deadly trap that will cause trouble for Israel. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-doublet\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#)) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

and as a whip on your sides and as thorns in your eyes

These phrases speak of the troubles these nations will cause Israel as if they were as painful as whips and thorns. (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 23:14

today I am about to go the way of all the earth

Joshua uses a polite term to refer to his death. Alternate translation: "I am going to die" (See: **Euphemism (p.717)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.717)**)

And you know with all your heart and with all your soul

Here the words "hearts" and "souls" have similar meanings. Together they emphasize deep personal knowledge. (See: **Doublet (p.713)**) (See: **Doublet (p.713)**)

not one word has fallen

These words emphasize that Yahweh's promises have all occurred. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: "every word has come true" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-doublenegatives\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-parallelism\]\]](#)) (See: **Double Negatives (p.710)**)

Joshua 23:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 23:16

and serve other gods and bow down to them

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. The second describes how the people “worship other gods.”
(See: **Parallelism (p.756)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.756)**)

then the nose of Yahweh will burn against you

“Kindled” here is a metaphor for the beginning of Yahweh’s anger, like a fire is “kindled” or started with “kindling” or very easy to start burning like dried grass or small twigs. Alternate translation: “Yahweh will begin to be angry with you” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 24

Joshua 24 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Joshua's instructions

In this chapter, Joshua gives the leaders and people instructions in preparation for his death. It was common in the Ancient Near East for important leaders to do this. Unfortunately, the people of Israel did not listen to Joshua's instructions.

Joshua 24:1

And Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel

Joshua's summons to the tribes is spoken of as if he gathered them together in a basket. Alternate translation: "Joshua asked all the tribes of Israel to meet with him" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

And they presented themselves before the face of

Alternate translation: "came and stood in front of" or "came before"

Joshua 24:2

from long ago

Alternate translation: "many years ago"

Thus says

Joshua begins to quote what Yahweh had said previously. The quotation continues until the end of verse 13.

Terah & Nahor

These are the names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 24:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 24:4

Seir

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

went down

Egypt was lower in elevation than the land of Canaan. Alternate translation: “traveled”

Joshua 24:5

I brought you out

The word “you” is plural and refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p. 719)**)

Joshua 24:6

And I brought your fathers out

The word “your” is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p. 719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

Joshua 24:7

And they cried out & between you

Yahweh continually alternates between these two phrases, which both refer to all the Israelites, past and present. The word “you” is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p. 719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

the sea

This refers to the Sea of Reeds.

in the wilderness

an uninhabited area, a desert

Joshua 24:8

you

The word “you” is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p. 719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

the Jordan

This is a short name for the Jordan River.

And I gave them into your hand

Here “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “enabled you to conquer them” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 24:9

Balak & Zippor

men's names (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

you

The word “you” is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

Joshua 24:10

וְאַצֵּל אֶתְכֶם מִיָּד

Here “hand” refers to power. Alternate translation: “enabled you to overcome him” (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 24:11

And you crossed over

The word “you” is plural throughout this speech and refers to the entire nation of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p. 719)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.719)**)

the Jordan

This is a short name for the Jordan River.

Joshua 24:12

the hornet

A small fast flying stinging insect that lives in colonies. Here, many “hornets” are spoken of as only one.

Joshua 24:13

General Information:

General Information:

Joshua finishes quoting what Yahweh said about his dealings with his people.

Joshua 24:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 24:15

But if it is evil in your eyes

The eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or desire. Alternate translation: "If you do not want" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

and my house

This represents his family that lives in his house. Alternate translation: "my family" (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 24:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 24:17

us and our fathers

The people speak as if they were present with their ancestors, and interchange the words “us” and “we” with “our ancestors.” (See: **Pronouns (p.763)**) (See: **Pronouns (p.763)**)

from the house of slavery

Here “house” is an idiom that refers to the location of their slavery. Alternate translation: “place where we were slaves” (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

the peoples & whom we passed

Alternate translation: “nations that we passed through”

Joshua 24:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 24:19

the people

This refers to the Israelites.

He is a jealous God

God wants his people to worship only him.

Joshua 24:20

then he will turn & and finish you

Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if he was a fire that would destroy them. Alternate translation: "He will destroy you as with fire" (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 24:21

the people

This refers to the Israelites.

Joshua 24:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 24:23

And bend your heart to Yahweh

Deciding to obey Yahweh only is spoken of as turning their heart towards him. Here “heart” represents the whole person. In this case, “heart” is plural because it refers to all the Israelites as a single group. However, it may be best to translate it in the plural since “your” is plural. Alternate translation: “turn yourselves to Yahweh” or “decide to obey Yahweh” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-synecdoche\]\]](#) and **Forms of You (p.719)** (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 24:24

the people

This refers to the Israelites.

and we will listen to his voice

Here “listen” means to obey. Alternate translation: “We will obey everything he tells us to do” (See: **Metonymy (p. 747)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.747)**)

Joshua 24:25

And he set for them a statute and a judgment

Establishing laws is spoken of as if Joshua physically set them in place like monuments. Alternate translation: “He established decrees and laws” or “He gave them laws and decrees to obey” (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.741)**)

Joshua 24:26

in the book of the law of God

This appears to be a continuation of the writings of Moses.

and set it up there

Alternate translation: "placed it there"

Joshua 24:27

the people

This refers to the Israelites.

this stone will be for a witness against us, because it has heard all the words of

The stone that Joshua set up is spoken of as if it were a person who heard what was spoken and would be able to testify about what was said. (See: **Personification (p.759)**) (See: **Personification (p.759)**)

lest you act deceptively

Alternate translation: "if you ever"

Joshua 24:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Joshua 24:29

a son of 110 years

“one hundred and ten years old” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 24:30

in Timnath Serah, & of Mount Gaash

names of places (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

Joshua 24:31

all the days of Joshua

This is an idiom that refers to Joshua's entire life. (See: **Idiom (p.734)**) (See: **Idiom (p.734)**)

lengthened days after Joshua

Alternate translation: "lived longer than Joshua"

Joshua 24:32

the bones of Joseph, & they buried in Shechem

It may be helpful to change the order of the beginning of this sentence. Alternate translation: “The people of Israel brought the bones of Joseph up out of Egypt and buried them at Shechem”

with a hundred pieces of money

“100 pieces” (See: **Numbers (p.749)**) (See: **Numbers (p.749)**)

Joshua 24:33

And Eleazar

This is a man's name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)

in Gibeah of

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.723)**)



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Version 36

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:

Parts of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Sentence Structure ([UTA PDF](#))

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**.

”

Referenced in: [Joshua 7:19](#)

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:

Sentence Structure ([UTA PDF](#))

Verbs ([UTA PDF](#))

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.

[Abstract Nouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Word Order \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:18](#); [Joshua 4:7](#); [Joshua 6:17](#); [Joshua 7:15](#); [Joshua 7:16](#); [Joshua 7:21](#); [Joshua 8:16](#); [Joshua 10:17](#); [Joshua 13:3](#); [Joshua 13:14](#); [Joshua 13:23](#); [Joshua 13:29](#); [Joshua 13:31](#); [Joshua 14:2](#); [Joshua 14:4](#); [Joshua 16:5](#); [Joshua 16:8](#); [Joshua 16:9](#); [Joshua 16:10](#); [Joshua 17:1](#); [Joshua 17:2](#); [Joshua 17:5](#); [Joshua 17:6](#); [Joshua 17:10](#); [Joshua 18:10](#); [Joshua 18:20](#); [Joshua 19:8](#); [Joshua 19:9](#); [Joshua 21:17](#); [Joshua 21:20](#); [Joshua 21:23](#); [Joshua 21:25](#); [Joshua 21:30](#); [Joshua 21:34](#); [Joshua 21:40](#); [Joshua 21:41](#)

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:

Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:10](#); [Joshua 1:12](#); [Joshua 2:22](#); [Joshua 2:23](#); [Joshua 3:17](#); [Joshua 4:1](#); [Joshua 4:5](#); [Joshua 4:8](#); [Joshua 4:9](#); [Joshua 4:12](#); [Joshua 4:20](#); [Joshua 5:3](#); [Joshua 5:10](#); [Joshua 6 General Notes](#); [Joshua 6:8](#); [Joshua 13:2](#); [Joshua 13:13](#); [Joshua 15 General Notes](#); [Joshua 15:14](#); [Joshua 16 General Notes](#); [Joshua 16:1](#); [Joshua 17 General Notes](#); [Joshua 17:14](#); [Joshua 18 General Notes](#); [Joshua 18:11](#); [Joshua 19 General Notes](#); [Joshua 21 General Notes](#)

Background Information

Description

When people tell a story, they normally tell the events in the order that they happened. This sequence of events makes up the storyline. The storyline is full of action verbs that move the story along in time. But sometimes a writer may take a break from the storyline and give some information to help his listeners understand the story better. This type of information is called background information. The background information might be about things that happened before the events he has already told about, or it might explain something in the story, or it might be about something that would happen much later in the story.

This page answers the question: *What is background information, and how can I show that some information is background information?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Order of Events ([UTA PDF](#))

Writing Styles ([UTA PDF](#))

Example — The bolded phrases in the story below are all background information.

Peter and John went on a hunting trip because **their village was going to have a feast the next day. Peter was the best hunter in the village. He once killed three wild pigs in one day!** They walked for hours through low bushes until they heard a wild pig. The pig ran, but they managed to shoot the pig and kill it. Then they tied up its legs with some rope **they had brought with them** and carried it home on a pole. When they brought it to the village, Peter's cousin saw the pig and realized that it was his own pig. Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin's pig.

Background information often tells about something that had happened earlier or something that would happen much later. Examples of these are: "their village was going to have a feast the next day," "He once killed three wild pigs in one day," and "that they had brought with them."

Often background information uses "be" verbs like "was" and "were," rather than action verbs. Examples of these are "their village was going to have a feast the next day," and "Peter **was** the best hunter in the village."

Background information can also be marked with words that tell the reader that this information is not part of the event line of the story. In this story, some of these words are "because," "once," and "had."

A writer may use background information:

- to help their listeners be interested in the story
- to help their listeners understand something in the story
- to help the listeners understand why something is important in the story
- to tell the setting of a story
 - > * Setting includes:
 - > * where the story takes place
 - > * when the story takes place
 - > * who is present when the story begins
 - > * what is happening when the story begins

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of marking background information and storyline information.
- You (the translator) need to know the order of the events in the Bible, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.
- You will need to translate the story in a way that marks the background information in a way that your own readers will understand the order of events, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.

Examples From the Bible

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram **was 86 years old** when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:15-16 ULT)

The first sentence tells about two events. Hagar gave birth and Abraham named his son. The second sentence is background information about how old Abram was when those things happened.

And Jesus himself **was beginning about 30 years old**. He **was the son** (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli, (Luke 3:23 ULT)

The verses before this tell about when Jesus was baptized. This sentence introduces background information about Jesus' age and ancestors. The story resumes in chapter 4 where it tells about Jesus going to the wilderness.

Then **it happened on a Sabbath** that he **was going through the grain fields**, and his disciples **were picking and eating the heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands**. But some of the Pharisees said ... (Luke 6:1-2a ULT)

These verses give the setting of the story. The events took place in a grain field on the Sabbath day. Jesus, his disciples, and some Pharisees were there, and Jesus' disciples were picking heads of grain and eating them. The main action in the story starts with the phrase, "But some of the Pharisees said"

Translation Strategies

To keep translations clear and natural you will need to study how people tell stories in your language. Observe how your language marks background information. You may need to write down some stories in order to study this. Observe what kinds of verbs your language uses for background information and what kinds of words or other markers signal that something is background information. Do these same things when you translate, so that your translation is clear and natural and people can understand it easily.

- (1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information.
- (2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first. (This is not always possible when the background information is very long.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information. The examples below explain how this was done in the ULT English translations.

And Jesus himself **was** beginning about 30 years old. He **was** the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli. (Luke 3:23 ULT)

As here, English sometimes uses the word "and" to show that there is some kind of change in the story. The verb "was" shows that it is background information.

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother, and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done**, added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

The bolded phrase happened before John rebuked Herod. In English, the helping verb "had" in "had done" shows that Herod did those things before John rebuked him.

- (2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first.

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.
Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

"**When Abram was 86 years old**, Hagar gave birth to his son, and Abram named his son Ishmael."

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother, and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done**, added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

The translation below reorders John's rebuke and Herod's actions.

"Now Herod the tetrarch married his brother's wife, Herodias, and **he did many other evil things**, so John rebuked him. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison."

Next we recommend you learn about:

Connecting Words and Phrases ([UTA PDF](#))

Introduction of a New Event ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 2:6](#); [Joshua 3:15](#); [Joshua 12:1](#); [Joshua 21:11](#)

Biblical Distance

Description

The following terms are the most common measures for distance or length that were originally used in the Bible. Most of these are based on the sizes of the hand and forearm.

- The **handbreadth** was the width of the palm of a man’s hand.
- The **span** or handspan was the width of a man’s hand with the fingers spread out.
- The **cubit** was the length of a man’s forearm, from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger.
- The **“long” cubit** is used only in Ezekiel 40-48. It is the length of a normal cubit plus a span.
- The **stadium** (plural, **stadia**) referred to a certain footrace that was about 185 meters in length. Some older English versions translated this word as “furlong,” which referred to the average length of a plowed field.

The metric values in the table below are close but not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures probably differed in exact length from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are an attempt to give an average measurement.

Original Measure	Metric Measure
handbreadth	8 centimeters
span	23 centimeters
cubit	46 centimeters
“long” cubit	54 centimeters
stadia	185 meters

Translation Principles

The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.

Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.

Whatever measure you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kind of measure in the text or a footnote.

If you do not use the Biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one cubit as “.46 meters” or even as “46 centimeters,” readers might think that the measurement is exact. It would be better to say “half a meter,” “45 centimeters,” or “50 centimeters.”

Sometimes it can be helpful to use the word “about” to show that a measurement is not exact. For example, Luke 24:13 says that Emmaus was 60 stadia from Jerusalem. This can be translated as “about ten kilometers” from Jerusalem.

When God tells people how long something should be, and when people make things according to those lengths, do not use “about” in the translation. Otherwise it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how long something should be.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the lengths and distances that are in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-decimal\]\]](#)
Fractions (UTA PDF)

Translation Strategies

- (1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)
- (2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Exodus 25:10 below.

They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be two and a half cubits; its width will be one cubit and a half; and its height will be one cubit and a half. (Exodus 25:10 ULT)

- (1) Use the measurements given in the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half kubits**; its width will be **one kubit and a half**; and its height will be **one kubit and a half**."

- (2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement. For example, if you measure things using the standard meter length, you could translate it as below.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The following shows both measurements in the text.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half cubits (one meter)**; its width will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**; and its height will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**."

- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULT measurements in notes.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; ¹ its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; ² and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

The footnotes would look like:

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; ¹ its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; ² and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

The footnotes would look like:

[¹] two and a half cubits
[²] one cubit and a half

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 3:4](#)

Biblical Weight

Description

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the values of weight in the Bible?*

The following terms are the most common units of weight in the Bible. The term “shekel” means “weight,” and many other weights are described in terms of the shekel. Some of these weights were used for money. The metric values in the table below are not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures differed in exact amount from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are only an attempt to give an average measurement.

Original Measure	Shekels	Grams	Kilograms
shekel	1 shekel	11 grams	-
bekah	1/2 shekel	5.7 grams	-
pim	2/3 shekel	7.6 grams	-
gerah	1/20 shekel	0.57 grams	-
mina	50 shekels	550 grams	1/2 kilogram
talent	3,000 shekels	-	34 kilograms

Translation Principles

The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.

Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.

Whatever measure you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kind of measure in the text or a footnote.

If you do not use the biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one gerah as “.57 grams,” readers might think that the measurement is exact. It would be better to say “half a gram.”

Sometimes it can be helpful to use the word “about” to show that a measurement is not exact. For example, 2 Samuel 21:16 says that Goliath’s spear weighed 300 shekels. Instead of translating this as “3300 grams” or “3.3 kilograms,” it can be translated as “about three and one half kilograms.”

When God tells people how much something should weigh, and when people use those weights, do not say “about” in the translation. Otherwise, it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how much the thing should weigh.

Translation Strategies

(1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)

(2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

(3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this, you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

(4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.

(5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Exodus 38:29 below.

█ The bronze from the wave offering weighed **70 talents and 2,400 shekels**. (Exodus 38:29 ULT)

(1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **70 talentes and 2,400 sekeles**."

(2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **2,400 kilograms**."

(3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **5,300 pounds**."

(4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a footnote. The following shows both measurements in the text.

█ "The bronze from the wave offering weighed **70 talents (2,380 kilograms) and 2,400 shekels (26.4 kilograms)**."

(5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a footnote. The following shows the ULT measurements in notes.

█ "The bronze from the offering weighed **70 talents and 2,400 shekels**. 1"

The footnote would look like:

█ [1] This was a total of about 2,400 kilograms.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Fractions \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Joshua 7:21](#)

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker's exact words. In the example below, John would have said "I" when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John's words, uses the word "I" in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John's exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: "".

- John said, "I do not know at what time I will arrive."

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

- John said that he did not know at what time he would arrive.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one than the other. There may be a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or as an indirect quotation.

Examples From the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have marked in bold the words that are quoted.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."
(Luke 5:14 ULT)

- Indirect quote: He commanded him **to tell no one**,
- Direct quote: but told him, "**Go, show yourself to the priest ...**"

And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21 ULT)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees **when the kingdom of God was coming**,
- Direct quote: he answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you.**"
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, '**Look, here it is!**' or, '**There it is!**'

This page answers the question: *What are direct and indirect quotations?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Pronouns ([UTA PDF](#))

Verbs ([UTA PDF](#))

Quotations and Quote Margins ([UTA PDF](#))

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:

Quotes within Quotes ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 15:18](#)

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:

Parts of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Sentence Structure ([UTA PDF](#))

Description

Negative words are words that have in them the meaning “not.” Examples in English are “no,” “not,” “none,” “no one,” “nothing,” “nowhere,” “never,” “nor,” “neither,” and “without.” Also, some words have prefixes or suffixes that mean “not,” such as the bolded parts of these words: “**un**happy,” “**im**possible,” and “**useless**.” Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as “lack” or “reject,” or even “fight” or “evil.”

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

We did this **not** because we have **no** authority ... (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)

And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)

Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as 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.

χωρὶς ἐμοῦ 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 ἓν ἢ 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:

Verbs ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 8:35](#); [Joshua 23:14](#)

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:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

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!"

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:5](#); [Joshua 1:8](#); [Joshua 2:11](#); [Joshua 2:23](#); [Joshua 9:25](#); [Joshua 10:35](#); [Joshua 17:14](#); [Joshua 23:2](#); [Joshua 23:13](#); [Joshua 23:14](#)

Ellipsis

Description

An ellipsis^[1] 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.

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:

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:

This page answers the question: *What is ellipsis ?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Sentence Structure ([UTA PDF](#))

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 **sinners in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinners 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.

”

Referenced in: [Joshua 7:7](#); [Joshua 14:4](#); [Joshua 17:10](#)

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.

... they found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa.
(1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

This means that Saul and his sons “were dead.” It is a euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

This page answers the question: *What is a euphemism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

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."

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 2:13](#); [Joshua 2:19](#); [Joshua 8:24](#); [Joshua 23:14](#)

Forms of You

Singular, Dual, and Plural

Some languages have more than one word for “you” based on how many people the word “you” refers to. The **singular** form refers to one person, and the **plural** form refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a **dual** form which refers to two people, and some languages have other forms that refer to three or four people.

This page answers the question: *What are the different forms of you?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Forms of ‘You’ — Singular ([UTA PDF](#))

Forms of ‘You’ — Dual/Plural ([UTA PDF](#))

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses a singular form of “you” even though he is speaking to a crowd.

- [Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups](#)

Formal and Informal

Some languages have more than one form of “you” based on the relationship between the speaker and the person he is talking to. People use the **formal** form of “you” when speaking to someone who is older, or has higher authority, or is someone they do not know very well. People use the **informal** form when speaking to someone who is not older, or does not have higher authority, or is a family member or close friend.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youform.

For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- [Forms of “You” — Formal or Informal](#)

”

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:2](#); [Joshua 1:3](#); [Joshua 1:4](#); [Joshua 1:5](#); [Joshua 2:9](#); [Joshua 2:12](#); [Joshua 2:20](#); [Joshua 6:16](#); [Joshua 24:5](#); [Joshua 24:6](#); [Joshua 24:7](#); [Joshua 24:8](#); [Joshua 24:9](#); [Joshua 24:11](#); [Joshua 24:23](#)

Hebrew Months

Description

This page answers the question: *What are the Hebrew months?*

The Hebrew calendar used in the Bible has twelve months. Unlike the western calendar, its first month begins in the spring of the northern hemisphere. Sometimes a month is called by its name (Aviv, Ziv, Sivan), and sometimes it is called by its order in the Hebrew calendar year (first month, second month, third month).

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may be surprised to read of months that they have never heard of, and they may wonder how those months correspond to the months that they use.
- Readers may not realize that phrases such as “the first month” or “the second month” refer to the first or second month of the Hebrew calendar, not some other calendar.
- Readers may not know when the first month of the Hebrew calendar begins.
- The Bible may tell about something happening in a certain month, but readers will not be able to fully understand what is said about it if they do not know what season of the year that was.

List of Hebrew Months

This is a list of the Hebrew months with information about them that may be helpful in the translation.

Aviv — (This month was called **Nisan** after the Babylonian exile.) This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. It is at the beginning of the spring season when the late rains come and people begin to harvest their crops. It is during the last part of March and the first part of April on western calendars. The Passover celebration started on Aviv 10; the Festival of Unleavened Bread was right after that, and the Festival of Harvest was a few weeks after that.

Ziv — This is the second month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the harvest season. It is during the last part of April and the first part of May on Western calendars.

Sivan — This is the third month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the dry season. It is during the last part of May and the first part of June on Western calendars. The Feast of Weeks is celebrated on Sivan 6.

Tammuz — This is the fourth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of June and the first part of July on Western calendars.

Ab — This is the fifth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the dry season. It is during the last part of July and the first part of August on Western calendars.

Elul — This is the sixth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is at the end of the dry season and the beginning of the rainy season. It is during the last part of August and the first part of September on Western calendars.

Ethanim — This is the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the early rain season which would soften the land for sowing. It is during the last part of September and the first part of October on Western calendars. The Feast of Ingathering and the Day of Atonement are celebrated in this month.

Bul — This is the eighth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the rainy season when people plough their fields and sow seed. It is during the last part of October and the first part of November on Western calendars.

Kislev — This is the ninth month of the Hebrew calendar. This is at the end of the sowing season and the beginning of the cold season. It is during the last part of November and the first part of December on Western calendars.

Tebeth — This is the tenth month of the Hebrew calendar. It is during the cold season when there may be rain and snow. It is during the last part of December and the first part of January on Western calendars.

Shebat — This is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. This is the coldest month of the year, and it has heavy rainfall. It is during the last part of January and the first part of February on Western calendars.

Adar — This is the twelfth and last month of the Hebrew calendar. This is during the cold season. It is during the last part of February and the first part of March on western calendars. The feast called Purim is celebrated in Adar.

Examples From the Bible

Today you are going out, in **the month of Aviv**. (Exodus 13:4 ULT)

You must eat unleavened bread from evening of the fourteenth day **in the first month of the year**, until evening of the twenty-first day of the month. (Exodus 12:18 ULT)

Translation Strategies

You may need to make some information about the months explicit. (See [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information](#).)

- (1) Tell the number of the Hebrew month.
- (2) Use the names for months that people know.
- (3) State clearly what season the month occurred in.
- (4) Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the Hebrew name of the month. (If possible, use a footnote to show the Hebrew month and day.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The examples below use these two verses.

At that time, you will appear before me in **the month of Aviv**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt. (Exodus 23:15b ULT)

It will always be a statute for you that in **the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month**, you must humble yourselves and do no work. (Leviticus 16:29a ULT)

- (1) Tell the number of the Hebrew month.

At that time, you will appear before me in **the first month of the year**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt.

- (2) Use the months that people know.

At that time, you will appear before me in **the month of March**, which is fixed for this purpose. It was in this month that you came out from Egypt.

It will always be a statute for you that **on the day I choose in late September** you must humble yourselves and do no work.

- (3) State clearly what season the month occurs in.

It will always be a statute for you that **in the autumn, on the tenth day of the seventh month**, you must humble yourselves and do no work.

(4) Refer to the time in terms of the season rather than in terms of the month.

It will always be a statute for you that in **the day I choose in early autumn**¹ you must humble yourselves and do no work.

The footnote would look like:

^[1] The Hebrew says, "the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month."

Next we recommend you learn about:

Ordinal Numbers ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 4:19](#); [Joshua 5:10](#)

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 ([UTA PDF](#))

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:

Copy or Borrow Words (UTA PDF)

Referenced in: Joshua 1:1; Joshua 1:12; Joshua 2:1; Joshua 2:10; Joshua 2:23; Joshua 5:3; Joshua 6:6; Joshua 7:1; Joshua 7:17; Joshua 7:18; Joshua 7:24; Joshua 8:30; Joshua 9:1; Joshua 9:7; Joshua 9:10; Joshua 9:17; Joshua 10:1; Joshua 10:3; Joshua 10:5; Joshua 10:10; Joshua 10:11; Joshua 10:12; Joshua 10:16; Joshua 10:21; Joshua 10:23; Joshua 10:28; Joshua 10:29; Joshua 10:31; Joshua 10:33; Joshua 10:34; Joshua 10:36; Joshua 10:38; Joshua 10:39; Joshua 11:1; Joshua 11:2; Joshua 11:3; Joshua 11:5; Joshua 11:7; Joshua 11:8; Joshua 11:17; Joshua 11:21; Joshua 12:1; Joshua 12:2; Joshua 12:3; Joshua 12:4; Joshua 12:5; Joshua 12:7; Joshua 12:8; Joshua 12:10; Joshua 12:11; Joshua 12:12; Joshua 12:13; Joshua 12:14; Joshua 12:15; Joshua 12:16; Joshua 12:17; Joshua 12:18; Joshua 12:19; Joshua 12:20; Joshua 12:21; Joshua 12:22; Joshua 12:23; Joshua 12:24; Joshua 13:3; Joshua 13:4; Joshua 13:5; Joshua 13:6; Joshua 13:9; Joshua 13:10; Joshua 13:11; Joshua 13:12; Joshua 13:13; Joshua 13:16; Joshua 13:17; Joshua 13:18; Joshua 13:19; Joshua 13:20; Joshua 13:21; Joshua 13:25; Joshua 13:26; Joshua 13:27; Joshua 13:30; Joshua 13:31; Joshua 14:6; Joshua 14:12; Joshua 14:15; Joshua 15:1; Joshua 15:3; Joshua 15:4; Joshua 15:6; Joshua 15:7; Joshua 15:8; Joshua 15:9; Joshua 15:10; Joshua 15:11; Joshua 15:13; Joshua 15:14; Joshua 15:15; Joshua 15:16; Joshua 15:17; Joshua 15:47; Joshua 16:2; Joshua 16:3; Joshua 16:5; Joshua 16:6; Joshua 16:7; Joshua 16:8; Joshua 17:1; Joshua 17:2; Joshua 17:3; Joshua 17:4; Joshua 17:7; Joshua 17:9; Joshua 17:11; Joshua 17:15; Joshua 17:16; Joshua 18:12; Joshua 18:13; Joshua 18:14; Joshua 18:15; Joshua 18:16; Joshua 18:17; Joshua 18:18; Joshua 18:19; Joshua 18:21; Joshua 19:2; Joshua 19:10; Joshua 19:11; Joshua 19:12; Joshua 19:13; Joshua 19:14; Joshua 19:15; Joshua 19:18; Joshua 19:19; Joshua 19:20; Joshua 19:21; Joshua 19:22; Joshua 19:25; Joshua 19:26; Joshua 19:27; Joshua 19:28; Joshua 19:29; Joshua 19:30; Joshua 19:33; Joshua 19:34; Joshua 19:35; Joshua 19:36; Joshua 19:37; Joshua 19:38; Joshua 19:41; Joshua 19:42; Joshua 19:43; Joshua 19:44; Joshua 19:45; Joshua 19:46; Joshua 19:47; Joshua 19:50; Joshua 20:7; Joshua 21:1; Joshua 21:4; Joshua 21:6; Joshua 21:7; Joshua 21:10; Joshua 21:11; Joshua 21:13; Joshua 21:14; Joshua 21:15; Joshua 21:16; Joshua 21:17; Joshua 21:18; Joshua 21:20; Joshua 21:21; Joshua 21:22; Joshua 21:23; Joshua 21:24; Joshua 21:25; Joshua 21:26; Joshua 21:27; Joshua 21:28; Joshua 21:29; Joshua 21:30; Joshua 21:31; Joshua 21:32; Joshua 21:34; Joshua 21:35; Joshua 21:36; Joshua 21:37; Joshua 21:38; Joshua 21:39; Joshua 22:1; Joshua 22:11; Joshua 22:13; Joshua 22:17; Joshua 22:20; Joshua 24:2; Joshua 24:4; Joshua 24:9; Joshua 24:30; Joshua 24:33

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:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

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.

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 8:16](#); [Joshua 11:4](#)

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:

Writing Styles ([UTA PDF](#))

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.

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Referenced in: [Joshua 2:17](#); [Joshua 2:19](#); [Joshua 22:22](#); [Joshua 22:23](#); [Joshua 22:24](#); [Joshua 22:25](#); [Joshua 22:27](#); [Joshua 22:28](#)

Idiom

An idiom is a figure of speech made up of a group of words that, as a whole, has a meaning that is different from what one would understand from the meanings of the individual words. Someone from outside of the culture usually cannot understand an idiom without someone inside the culture explaining its true meaning. Every language uses idioms. Some English examples are:

- You are pulling my leg. (This means, “You are teasing me by telling me something that is not true.”)
- Do not push the envelope. (This means, “Do not take a matter to its extreme.”)
- This house is under water. (This means, “The debt owed for this house is greater than its actual value.”)
- We are painting the town red. (This means, “We are going around town tonight celebrating very intensely.”)

This page answers the question: *What are idioms and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

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**

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:2](#); [Joshua 1:3](#); [Joshua 1:11](#); [Joshua 1:14](#); [Joshua 1:15](#); [Joshua 2:8](#); [Joshua 2:14](#); [Joshua 2:23](#); [Joshua 3:11](#); [Joshua 3:17](#); [Joshua 4:1](#); [Joshua 4:10](#); [Joshua 4:11](#); [Joshua 7:14](#); [Joshua 7:16](#); [Joshua 7:17](#); [Joshua 10 General Notes](#); [Joshua 10:22](#); [Joshua 11 General Notes](#); [Joshua 14:7](#); [Joshua 14:11](#); [Joshua 15:18](#); [Joshua 18:4](#); [Joshua 18:8](#); [Joshua 20:9](#); [Joshua 21:2](#); [Joshua 22:9](#); [Joshua 22:29](#); [Joshua 22:30](#); [Joshua 22:33](#); [Joshua 24:17](#); [Joshua 24:31](#)

Imperatives — Other Uses

Description

Imperative sentences are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. In the Bible, sometimes imperative sentences have other uses.

This page answers the question: *What other uses are there for imperative sentences in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Sentence Types ([UTA PDF](#))

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use an imperative sentence for some of the functions that they are used for in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Speakers often use imperative sentences to tell or ask their listeners to do something. In Genesis 26, God spoke to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt but to live where God would tell him to live.

Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, “**Do not go down** to Egypt; **live** in the land that I tell you to live in.” (Genesis 26:2 ULT)

Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

Imperatives that make things happen

God can make things happen by commanding that they happen. Jesus healed a man by commanding that the man be healed. The man could not do anything to obey the command, but Jesus caused him to be healed by commanding it. (In this context, the command “Be clean” means to “be healed” so that others around would know that it was safe to touch the man again.)

“I am willing. **Be clean.**” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

In Genesis 1, God commanded that there should be light, and by commanding it, he caused it to exist. Some languages, such as the Hebrew of the Bible, have commands that are in the third person. English does not do that, and so it must turn the third-person command into a general, second-person command, as in the ULT:

God said, “**Let there be** light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Languages that have third-person commands can follow the original Hebrew, which translates into English as something like “light must be.”

Imperatives that function as blessings

In the Bible, God blesses people by using imperatives. This indicates what his will is for them.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

Imperatives that function as conditions

An imperative sentence can also be used to tell the **condition** under which something will happen. The proverbs mainly tell about life and things that often happen. The purpose of Proverbs 4:6 below is not primarily to give a command, but to teach what people can expect to happen **if** they love wisdom.

Do not abandon wisdom and she will watch over you;
love her and she will keep you safe. (Proverbs 4:6 ULT)

The purpose of Proverbs 22:6, below, is to teach what people can expect to happen if they teach their children the way they should go.

Teach a child the way he should go,
and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.
- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.
- (3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.

Be clean. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

“You are now clean.”
“I now cleanse you.”

God said, “**Let there be** light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, “**There is now light**” and there was light.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

God blessed them and said to them, “**My will for you is that you be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **I want you to have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.

God said, “**Let there be** light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, ‘Let there be light,’ **so** there was light.
God said, “Light must be;” **as a result**, there was light.

(3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Teach a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translated as:

If you teach a child the way he should go,
then when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.”

”

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:6](#); [Joshua 1:7](#); [Joshua 1:9](#)

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:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

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."

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 10:6](#); [Joshua 11:15](#); [Joshua 21:44](#); [Joshua 21:45](#); [Joshua 22:3](#); [Joshua 22:17](#)

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:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Simile ([UTA PDF](#))

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](#).

"

Referenced in: Joshua 2:9; Joshua 2:24; Joshua 3:7; Joshua 3:10; Joshua 5:6; Joshua 5:9; Joshua 5:13; Joshua 6:18; Joshua 6:26; Joshua 6:27; Joshua 7:1; Joshua 7:11; Joshua 7:15; Joshua 7:19; Joshua 7:26; Joshua 11:6; Joshua 11:8; Joshua 11:10; Joshua 11:20; Joshua 11:23; Joshua 13:6; Joshua 13:14; Joshua 13:23; Joshua 13:28; Joshua 13:29; Joshua 13:32; Joshua 13:33; Joshua 14:1; Joshua 14:3; Joshua 14:8; Joshua 14:9; Joshua 14:13; Joshua 14:14; Joshua 15:5; Joshua 15:20; Joshua 16:4; Joshua 16:8; Joshua 16:9; Joshua 17:4; Joshua 17:6; Joshua 18:2; Joshua 18:4; Joshua 18:7; Joshua 18:18; Joshua 18:19; Joshua 18:20; Joshua 18:28; Joshua 19:1; Joshua 19:2; Joshua 19:8; Joshua 19:16; Joshua 19:23; Joshua 19:31; Joshua 19:39; Joshua 19:41; Joshua 19:48; Joshua 19:49; Joshua 19:51; Joshua 22:5; Joshua 22:11; Joshua 22:27; Joshua 22:29; Joshua 22:34; Joshua 23:6; Joshua 23:8; Joshua 23:12; Joshua 23:13; Joshua 23:16; Joshua 24:1; Joshua 24:15; Joshua 24:20; Joshua 24:23; Joshua 24:25

Metonymy

Description

Metonymy is a figure of speech in which an item (either physical or abstract) is called not by its own name, but by the name of something closely associated with it. A metonym is a word or phrase used as a substitute for something that it is associated with.

This page answers the question: *What is a metonymy?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

... 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](#).

”

Referenced in: [Joshua 2:19](#); [Joshua 3:3](#); [Joshua 4:10](#); [Joshua 4:24](#); [Joshua 5:1](#); [Joshua 5:6](#); [Joshua 6:2](#); [Joshua 6:8](#); [Joshua 6:10](#); [Joshua 6:25](#); [Joshua 7:7](#); [Joshua 7:8](#); [Joshua 7:9](#); [Joshua 7:12](#); [Joshua 7:13](#); [Joshua 8:1](#); [Joshua 8:7](#); [Joshua 8:15](#); [Joshua 8:18](#); [Joshua 8:35](#); [Joshua 9:2](#); [Joshua 9:15](#); [Joshua 9:23](#); [Joshua 10:6](#); [Joshua 10:8](#); [Joshua 10:13](#); [Joshua 10:19](#); [Joshua 10:32](#); [Joshua 10:37](#); [Joshua 10:39](#); [Joshua 17:17](#); [Joshua 18:5](#); [Joshua 20:2](#); [Joshua 20:3](#); [Joshua 20:5](#); [Joshua 20:9](#); [Joshua 21:8](#); [Joshua 21:44](#); [Joshua 22:2](#); [Joshua 22:31](#); [Joshua 23:9](#); [Joshua 24:8](#); [Joshua 24:10](#); [Joshua 24:15](#); [Joshua 24:24](#)

Numbers

Description

There are many numbers in the Bible. They can be written as words ("five") or as numerals ("5"). Some numbers are very large, such as "two hundred" (200), "twenty-two thousand" (22,000), or "one hundred million" (100,000,000). Some languages do not have words for all of these numbers. Translators need to decide how to translate numbers and whether to write them as words or numerals.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate numbers?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Translate Unknowns ([UTA PDF](#))

Some numbers are exact and others are rounded.

Abram was **86** years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

Eighty-six (86) is an exact number.

That day about **3,000** of the people died. (Exodus 32:28b ULT)

Here the number three thousand (3,000) is a round number. It may have been a little more than that or a little less than that. The word "about" shows that it is not an exact number.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have words for some of these numbers.

Translation Principles

- Exact numbers should be translated as closely and specifically as they can be.
- Rounded numbers can be translated more generally.

Examples From the Bible

When Jared had lived **162** years, he became the father of Enoch. After he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Jared lived **962** years, and then he died. (Genesis 5:18-20 ULT)

The numbers 162, 800, and 962 are exact numbers and should be translated with something as close to those numbers as possible.

Our sister, may you be the mother of **thousands of ten thousands**. (Genesis 24:60b ULT)

This is a rounded number. It does not say exactly how many descendants she should have, but it was a huge number of them.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Write numbers using numerals.
- (2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.
- (3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parentheses after them.

(4) Combine words for large numbers.

(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

We will use the following verse in our examples:

Now, see, at great effort I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities. (1 Chronicles 22:14a ULT)

(1) Write numbers using numerals.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **100,000** talents of gold, **1,000,000** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(2) Write numbers using your language's words or the Gateway Language words for those numbers.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **one million** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(3) Write numbers using words, and put the numerals in parenthesis after them.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house one **hundred thousand (100,000)** talents of gold, **one million (1,000,000)** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(4) Combine words for large numbers.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **one hundred thousand** talents of gold, **a thousand thousand** talents of silver, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

(5) Use a very general expression for very large rounded numbers and write the numeral in parentheses afterward.

I have prepared for Yahweh's house **a great amount of gold (100,000 talents), ten times that amount of silver (1,000,000 talents)**, and bronze and iron in large quantities.

Consistency

Be consistent in your translations. Decide how the numbers will be translated, using numbers or numerals. There are different ways of being consistent.

- Use words to represent numbers all of the time. (You might have very long words.)
- Use numerals to represent numbers all of the time.
- Use words to represent the numbers that your language has words for and use numerals for the numbers that your language does not have words for.
- Use words for low numbers and numerals for high numbers.
- Use words for numbers that require few words and numerals for numbers that require more than a few words.
- Use words to represent numbers, and write the numerals in parentheses after them.

Consistency in the ULT and UST

The *unfoldingWord® Literal Text* (ULT) and the *unfoldingWord® Simplified Text* (UST) use words for the numbers one through ten and use numerals for all numbers above ten.

When Adam had lived **130** years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, after his image, and he called his name Seth. After Adam became the father of Seth, he lived **800** years. He became the father of more sons and daughters. Adam lived **930** years, and then he died.
(Genesis 5:3-5 ULT)

Next we recommend you learn about:

Ordinal Numbers ([UTA PDF](#))

Fractions ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 6:13](#); [Joshua 6:14](#); [Joshua 7:4](#); [Joshua 7:5](#); [Joshua 8:12](#); [Joshua 8:25](#); [Joshua 9:17](#); [Joshua 10:5](#); [Joshua 12:24](#); [Joshua 21:19](#); [Joshua 21:22](#); [Joshua 21:24](#); [Joshua 21:27](#); [Joshua 21:33](#); [Joshua 21:37](#); [Joshua 21:40](#); [Joshua 21:41](#); [Joshua 23:10](#); [Joshua 24:29](#); [Joshua 24:32](#)

Order of Events

Description

In the Bible, events are not always told in the order in which they occurred. Sometimes the author wanted to discuss something that happened at an earlier time than the event that he just talked about. This can be confusing to the reader.

This page answers the question: *Why are some events not listed in the order they happened, and how do I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Writing Styles ([UTA PDF](#))

Verbs ([UTA PDF](#))

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers might think that the events happened in the order that they are told. It is important to help them understand the correct order of events.

Examples From the Bible

He even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

This could sound like John baptized Jesus after John was locked up in prison, but John baptized Jesus before John was locked up in prison.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, and the ark of the covenant of Yahweh followed after them. But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

This could sound like Joshua gave the order not to shout after the army had already started their march, but he had given that order before they started marching.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

This sounds like a person must first open the scroll and then break its seals, but the seals that lock the scroll must be broken before the scroll can be unrolled.

Translation Strategies

- (1) If your language uses phrases or time words to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using one of them.
- (2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that. (See the section on "Aspect" of [Verbs](#).)
- (3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occurred, consider reordering the events so they are in that order. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6). (See [Verse Bridges](#).)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If your language uses phrases, time words or tenses to show that an event happened before the one just mentioned, consider using one of them.

20 he even added this to them all: he locked John up in prison. Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, Jesus also was baptized. (Luke 3:20-21 ULT)

20 But then Herod ... had John locked up in prison. 21 **Before John was put in prison**, while all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus also was baptized.

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to open the scroll **after** breaking its seals?

(2) If your language uses verb tense or aspect to show that an event happened before one that was already mentioned, consider using that.

Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets 10 But Joshua **had commanded** the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout."

(3) If your language prefers to tell events in the order that they occur, consider reordering the events. This may require putting two or more verses together (like 5-6).

8 Just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carrying seven trumpets of rams' horns before Yahweh went forward and blew the trumpets, But Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout nor let your voice be heard, nor let any word leave your mouth until the day I tell you to shout. Then you must shout." (Joshua 6:8,10 ULT)

8,10 Joshua commanded the people, saying, "Do not shout. No sound must leave your mouths until the day I tell you to shout. Only then must you shout." Then just as Joshua had said to the people, the seven priests carried the seven trumpets of rams horns before Yahweh, as they advanced, they gave a blast on the trumpets...

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals? (Revelation 5:2b ULT)

Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_events.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Background Information ([UTA PDF](#))

Connecting Words and Phrases ([UTA PDF](#))

Introduction of a New Event ([UTA PDF](#))

Verse Bridges ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 6:10](#); [Joshua 18:1](#)

Ordinal Numbers

Description

Ordinal numbers are used in the Bible mainly to tell the position of something in a list.

And God has indeed appointed some in the church, **first** apostles, **second** prophets, **third** teachers, then miracles. (1 Corinthians 12:28a ULT)

This page answers the question: *What are ordinal numbers and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Numbers \(UTA PDF\)](#)

This is a list of workers that God gave to the church in their order.

Ordinal Numbers in English

Most ordinal numbers in English simply have “-th” added to the end.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
4	four	fourth
10	ten	tenth
100	one hundred	one hundredth
1,000	one thousand	one thousandth

Some ordinal numbers in English do not follow that pattern.

Numeral	Number	Ordinal Number
1	one	first
2	two	second
3	three	third
5	five	fifth
12	twelve	twelfth

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not have special numbers for showing the order of items in a list. There are different ways to deal with this.

Examples From the Bible

The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim ... the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

The people cast lots and one went to each of these people in the order given.

You must place in it four rows of precious stones. The **first** row must have a ruby, a topaz, and a garnet. The **second** row must have an emerald, a sapphire, and a diamond. The **third** row

must have a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst. The **fourth** row must have a beryl, and an onyx, and a jasper. They must be mounted in gold settings. (Exodus 28:17-20 ULT)

This describes four rows of stones. The first row is probably the top row, and the fourth row is probably the bottom row.

Translation Strategies

If your language has ordinal numbers and using them would give the right meaning, consider using them. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

- (1) Use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.
- (2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Tell the total number of items, and use “one” with the first item and “another” or “the next” with the rest.

The first lot went to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim ... the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

There were **24** lots. **One** lot went to Jehoiarib, **another** to Jedaiah, **another** to Harim ... **another** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.

There were **24** lots. **One** lot went to Jehoiarib, **the next** to Jedaiah, **the next** to Harim ... **the next** to Delaiah, **and the last** went to Maaziah.

A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **the first** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the second** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of **the third** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. **The fourth** river is the Euphrates. (Genesis 2:10-14 ULT)

A river went out of Eden to water the garden. From there it divided and became **four** rivers. The name of **one** is Pishon. It is the one which flows throughout the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good. There is also bdellium and the onyx stone there. The name of **the next** river is Gihon. This one flows throughout the whole land of Cush. The name of **the next** river is Tigris, which flows east of Asshur. The **last** river is the Euphrates.

- (2) Tell the total number of items and then list them or the things associated with them.

The **first** lot went to Jehoiarib, the **second** to Jedaiah, the **third** to Harim, the **fourth** to Seorim ... the **twenty-third** to Delaiah, and the **twenty-fourth** to Maaziah. (1 Chronicles 24:7-18 ULT)

They cast **24** lots. The lots went to Jerhoiarib, Jedaiah, Harim, Seorim ... Delaiah, and Maaziah.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Fractions \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Joshua 6:14](#); [Joshua 19:1](#); [Joshua 19:10](#); [Joshua 19:17](#); [Joshua 19:24](#); [Joshua 19:32](#); [Joshua 19:40](#)

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."

Yahweh sees everything a person does
and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

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 ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:18](#); [Joshua 2:12](#); [Joshua 5:1](#); [Joshua 7:5](#); [Joshua 8:1](#); [Joshua 8:24](#); [Joshua 9:15](#); [Joshua 10:12](#); [Joshua 10:28](#); [Joshua 10:40](#); [Joshua 11:11](#); [Joshua 11:14](#); [Joshua 23:16](#)

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:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add words or phrases to make the human (or animal) characteristic clear.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — God speaks of sin as if it were a wild animal that is waiting for the chance to attack. This shows how dangerous sin is. An additional phrase can be added to make this danger clear.

Sin is at your door, **waiting to attack you**.

(2) In addition to Strategy (1), use words such as “like” or “as” to show that the sentence is not to be understood literally.

Sin crouches at the door. (Genesis 4:7b ULT) — This can be translated with the word “as.”

Sin is crouching at the door, **just as a wild animal does as it waits to attack a person..**

(3) Find a way to translate it without the personification.

Even the **winds and the sea obey him**. (Matthew 8:27b ULT) — The men speak of the “wind and the sea” as if they are able to hear and obey Jesus, just as people can. This could also be translated without the idea of obedience by speaking of Jesus controlling them.

He even **controls the winds and the sea**.

NOTE: We have broadened our definition of “personification” to include “zoomorphism” (speaking of other things as if they had animal characteristics) and “anthropomorphism” (speaking of non-human things as if they had human characteristics) because the translation strategies for them are the same.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Apostrophe ([UTA PDF](#))

Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 8:2](#); [Joshua 10:12](#); [Joshua 11:23](#); [Joshua 14:15](#); [Joshua 24:27](#)

Predictive Past

Description

The predictive past is a figure of speech that uses the past tense to refer to things that will happen in the future. This is sometimes done in prophecy to show that the event will certainly happen. It is also called the prophetic perfect.

Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding;
their honored leaders go hungry, and their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

This page answers the question: *What is the predictive past?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Verbs ([UTA PDF](#))

In the example above, the people of Israel had not yet gone into captivity, but God spoke of their going into captivity as if it had already happened because he had decided that they certainly would go into captivity.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Readers who are not aware of the past tense being used in prophecy to refer to future events may find it confusing.

Examples From the Bible

Now Jericho was tightly closed because of the sons of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:1-2 ULT)

For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given;
and the rule will be on his shoulder. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

In the examples above, God spoke of things that would happen in the future as if they had already happened.

But even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, "Look! The Lord came with thousands and thousands of his holy ones." (Jude 1:14 ULT)

Enoch was speaking of something that would happen in the future, but he used the past tense when he said "the Lord came."

Translation Strategies

If the past tense would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.
- (2) If it refers to something in the immediate future, use a form that would show that.
- (3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.

For to us a child **has been born**, to us a son **has been given**. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

For to us a child **will be born**, to us a son **will be given**.

(2) If it refers to something that would happen very soon, use a form that shows that.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am about to deliver** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

(3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am delivering** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:3](#); [Joshua 6:2](#); [Joshua 6:16](#); [Joshua 8:1](#)

Pronouns

Description

Pronouns are words that people might use instead of using a noun when referring to someone or something. Some examples are "I," "you," "he," "it," "this," "that," "himself," "someone," and others. The personal pronoun is the most common type of pronoun.

This page answers the question: *What are pronouns, and what kinds of pronouns are in some languages?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Parts of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns refer to people or things and show whether the speaker is referring to himself, the person he is speaking to, or someone or something else. The following are kinds of information that personal pronouns may provide. Other types of pronouns may give some of this information, as well.

Person

- First Person — The speaker and possibly others (I, me, we, us)
 - [Exclusive and Inclusive "We"](#)
- Second Person — The person or people that the speaker is talking to and possibly others (you)
 - [Forms of You](#)
- Third Person — Someone or something other than the speaker and those he is talking to (he, she, it, they)

Number

- Singular — one (I, you, he, she, it)
- Plural — more than one (we, you, they)
 - [Singular Pronouns that Refer to Groups](#)
- Dual — two (Some languages have pronouns specifically for two people or two things.)

Gender

- Masculine — he
- Feminine — she
- Neuter — it

Relationship to other words in the sentence

- Subject of the verb: I, you, he, she, it, we, they
- Object of the verb or preposition: me, you, him, her, it, us, them
- Possessor with a noun: my, your, his, her, its, our, their
- Possessor without a noun: mine, yours, his, hers, its, ours, theirs

Other Types of pronouns

Reflexive Pronouns refer to another noun or pronoun in the same sentence: myself, yourself, himself, herself, itself, ourselves, yourselves, themselves.

- John saw **himself** in the mirror. The word "himself" refers to John.

Interrogative Pronouns are used to make a question that needs more than just a yes or no for an answer: what, which, who, whom, whose.

- **Who** built the house?

Relative Pronouns mark a relative clause. The relative pronouns, who, whom, whose, which and that give more information about a noun in the main part of the sentence. Sometimes, the relative adverbs when and where can also be used as relative pronouns.

- I saw the house **that John built**. The clause “that John built” tells which house I saw.
- I saw the man **who built the house**. The clause “who built the house” tells which man I saw.

Demonstrative Pronouns are used to draw attention to someone or something and to show distance from the speaker or something else. The demonstrative pronouns are: this, these, that, and those.

- Have you seen **this** here?
- Who is **that** over there?

Indefinite pronouns are used when no particular noun is being referred to. The indefinite pronouns are: any, anyone, someone, anything, something, and some. Sometimes a personal pronoun is used in a generic way to do this: you, they, he or it.

- He does not want to talk to **anyone**.
- **Someone** fixed it, but I do not know who.
- **They** say that **you** should not wake a sleeping dog.

In the last example, “they” and “you” just refer to people in general.

”

Referenced in: [Joshua 4:1](#); [Joshua 24:17](#)

Quotes within Quotes

Description

A quotation may have a quote within it, and quotes that are inside of other quotes can also have quotes within them. When a quote has quotes within it, we say there are “layers” of quotation, and each of the quotes is a layer. When there are many layers of quotes inside of quotes, it can be hard for listeners and readers to know who is saying what. Some languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes to make it easier.

This page answers the question: *What is a quote within a quote, and how can I help the readers understand who is saying what?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Direct and Indirect Quotations ([UTA PDF](#))

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

When there is a quote within a quote, the listener needs to know who the pronouns refer to. For example: if a quote that is inside a quote has the word “I,” the listener needs to know whether “I” refers to the speaker of the inner quote or the outer quote.

Some languages make this clear by using different kinds of quotes when there are quotes within quotes.

They may use direct quotes for some and indirect quotes for others.

Some languages do not use indirect quotes.

Examples From the Bible

A quotation with only one layer

But Paul said, “I, however, was indeed born a citizen.” (Acts 22:28b ULT)

Quotations with two layers

Jesus answered and said to them, “Be careful that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name. They will say, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will lead many astray.” (Matthew 24:4-5 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to his disciples. The second layer is what other people will say.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king.” (John 18:37b ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to Pilate. The second layer is what Pilate said about Jesus.

A quotation with three layers

Abraham said, “... I said to her, ‘You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, **“He is my brother.”**” (Genesis 20:11a, 13 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Abraham responded to Abimelech. The second layer is what Abraham had told his wife. The third layer is what he wanted his wife to say. (We have bolded the third layer.)

A quotation with four layers

They said to him, “A man came to meet us who said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, “Yahweh says this: **‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal- Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.’**” (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

The outermost layer is what the messengers said to the king. The second layer is what the man who had met the messengers told them. The third is what that man wanted the messengers to say to the king. The fourth is what Yahweh said. (We have bolded the fourth layer.)

Translation Strategies

Some languages use only direct quotes. Other languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes. In those languages it might sound strange and perhaps even be confusing if there are many layers of direct quotes.

(1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes.

(2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. (See [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#).)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes. In the example below we have bolded the indirect quotes in the ULT and the quotes that we have changed to direct quotes below it.

Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul, saying, "There is a certain man was left here as a prisoner by Felix. So I am uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked **if he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there to be judged concerning these things**. But when Paul appealed **to keep him in custody for the decision of the emperor**, I ordered him **to be held in custody until when I could send him to Caesar**." (Acts 25:14b, 20-21 ULT)

Festus presented Paul's case to the king. He said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. I was uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked him, '**Will you go to Jerusalem to be judged there concerning these things?**' But when Paul said, '**I want to be kept in custody for the emperor's decision,**' I told the guard, '**Keep him in custody until when I can send him to Caesar.**'"

(2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. In English the word "that" can come before indirect quotes. It is bolded in the examples below. The pronouns that changed because of the indirect quote are also bolded.

And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Speak to them and say, 'During the evenings you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be satisfied with bread. And you will know that I am Yahweh your God.'" (Exodus 16:11-12 ULT)

And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Tell them **that** during the evenings **they** will eat meat, and in the morning **they** will be satisfied with bread. And **they** will know that I am Yahweh **their** God."

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

They told him **that** a man had come to meet **them** who said to **them**, "Go back to the king who sent you, and tell him **that** Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal

Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

Quote Markings ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 1:11](#); [Joshua 4:3](#)

Reflexive Pronouns

Description

All languages have ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. English does this by using reflexive pronouns. These are pronouns that refer to someone or something that has already been mentioned in a sentence. In English the reflexive pronouns are: “myself,” “yourself,” “himself,” “herself,” “itself,” “ourselves,” “yourselves,” and “themselves.” Other languages may have other ways to show this.

This page answers the question: *What are reflexive pronouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. For those languages, translators will need to know how to translate the English reflexive pronouns.
- The reflexive pronouns in English also have other functions.

Uses of Reflexive Pronouns

- To show that the same person or things fills two different roles in a sentence
- To emphasize a person or thing in the sentence
- To show that someone did something alone
- To show that someone or something was alone

Examples From the Bible

Reflexive pronouns are used to show the same person or thing fills two different roles in a sentence.

If **I** should testify about **myself**, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31 ULT)

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and **many** went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to purify **themselves**. (John 11:55 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to emphasize a person or thing in the sentence.

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2 ULT)

So they left the crowd, taking Jesus with them, just as he was, in the boat. There also were other boats with him. Then a violent windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already full of water. But **Jesus himself** was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. (Mark 4:36-38a ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone did something alone.

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone or something was alone.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. **It** was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If a reflexive pronoun would have the same function in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other strategies.

- (1) In some languages people put something on the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.
- (2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.
- (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it.
- (4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”
- (5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) In some languages people modify the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.

If I should testify about **myself** alone, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31)

“If I should **self-testify** alone, my testimony would not be true.”

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to **purify themselves**. (John 11:55)

“Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out from country before the Passover in order to **self-purify**.”

- (2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.

He himself took our sickness and bore our diseases. (Matthew 8:17 ULT)

“**It was he who** took our sickness and bore our diseases.”

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2)

“**It was not Jesus who** was baptizing, but his disciples were.”

- (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it. English adds the reflexive pronoun.

But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he **himself** knew what he was going to do. (John 6:6)

- (4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15)

“When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again **alone** up the mountain.”

- (5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

"He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up and lying **in its own place.**"

"

Referenced in: [Joshua 11:14](#)

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:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Sentence Types ([UTA PDF](#))

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

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Referenced in: [Joshua 1:9](#); [Joshua 7:8](#); [Joshua 7:9](#); [Joshua 7:10](#); [Joshua 7:25](#); [Joshua 9:7](#); [Joshua 10:13](#); [Joshua 17:14](#); [Joshua 18:3](#); [Joshua 22:17](#); [Joshua 22:20](#); [Joshua 22:24](#)

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 ([UTA PDF](#))

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.

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Referenced in: [Joshua 5:14](#); [Joshua 5:15](#); [Joshua 7:6](#)

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)

■ I looked on all the deeds that **I** had accomplished

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:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Metonymy ([UTA PDF](#))

Biblical Imagery — Common Metonymies ([UTA PDF](#))

Next we recommend you learn about:

Metonymy ([UTA PDF](#))

Biblical Imagery — Common Metonymies ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Joshua 3:15](#); [Joshua 7:5](#); [Joshua 9:6](#); [Joshua 9:11](#); [Joshua 10:9](#); [Joshua 10:24](#); [Joshua 10:42](#); [Joshua 11:11](#); [Joshua 13:12](#); [Joshua 14:2](#); [Joshua 14:9](#); [Joshua 22:5](#)



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 40

circumcise, circumcised, circumcision, uncircumcised, uncircumcision

Definition:

The term “circumcise” means to cut off the foreskin of a man or male child. A circumcision ceremony may be performed in connection with this.

- God commanded Abraham to circumcise every male among his family and servants as a sign of God’s covenant with them.
- God also commanded Abraham’s descendants to continue to do this for every baby boy born into their households.
- The phrase, “circumcision of the heart” refers figuratively to the “cutting away” or removal of sin from a person.
- In a spiritual sense, “the circumcised” refers to people whom God has purified from sin through the blood of Jesus and who are his people.
- The term “uncircumcised” refers to those who have not been circumcised physically. It can also refer figuratively to those who have not been circumcised spiritually, who do not have a relationship with God.

The terms “uncircumcised” and “uncircumcision” refer to a male who has not been physically circumcised. These terms are also used figuratively.

- Egypt was a nation that also required circumcision. So when God talks about Egypt being defeated by the “uncircumcised,” he is referring to people whom the Egyptians despised for not being circumcised.
- The Bible refers to people who have an “uncircumcised heart” or who are “uncircumcised in heart.” This a figurative way of saying that these people are not God’s people, and are stubbornly disobedient to him.
- If a word for circumcision is used or known in the language, “uncircumcised” could be translated as “not circumcised.”
- The expression “the uncircumcision” could be translated as “people who are not circumcised” or “people who do not belong to God,” depending on the context.
- Other ways to translate figurative senses of this term could include “not God’s people” or “rebellious like those who don’t belong to God” or “people who have no sign of belonging to God.”
- The expression “uncircumcised in heart” could be translated as “stubbornly rebellious” or “refusing to believe.” However, if possible it is best to keep the expression or a similar one since spiritual circumcision is an important concept.

Translation Suggestions:

- If the culture of the target language performs circumcisions on males, the word used to refer to this should be used for this term.
- Other ways to translate this term would be, “cut around” or “cut in a circle” or “cut off the foreskin.”
- In cultures where circumcision is not known, it may be necessary to explain it in a footnote or glossary.
- Make sure the term used to translate this does not refer to females. It may be necessary to translate this with a word or phrase that includes the meaning of “male.”

(See also: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))

(See also: [Abraham, covenant](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:11
- Genesis 17:14
- Exodus 12:48

- Leviticus 26:41
- Joshua 5:3
- Judges 15:18
- 2 Samuel 1:20
- Jeremiah 9:26
- Ezekiel 32:25
- Acts 10:44-45
- Acts 11:3
- Acts 15:1
- Acts 11:3
- Romans 2:27
- Galatians 5:3
- Ephesians 2:11
- Philippians 3:3
- Colossians 2:11
- Colossians 2:13

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:3** "You must **circumcise** every male in your family."
- **5:5** That day Abraham **circumcised** all the males in his household.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H4135, H4139, H5243, H6188, H6189, H6190, G02030, G05640, G19860, G40590, G40610

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Referenced in: [Joshua 5 General Notes](#)

faith

Definition:

In general, the term “faith” refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To “have faith” in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To “have faith in Jesus” means to believe all of God’s teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes “faith” refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression “the truths of the faith.”
- In contexts such as “keep the faith” or “abandon the faith,” the term “faith” refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, “faith” can be translated as “belief” or “conviction” or “confidence” or “trust.”
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb “believe.” (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- The expression “keep the faith” could be translated by “keep believing in Jesus” or “continue to believe in Jesus.”
- The sentence “they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith” could be translated by “they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught.”
- The expression “my true son in the faith” could be translated by something like “who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus” or “my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faithful](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:7
- Acts 6:7
- Galatians 2:20-21
- James 2:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:6** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham’s **faith** by saying, “Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me.”
- **31:7** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, “You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?”
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, “Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace.”
- **38:9** Then Jesus said to Peter, “Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0529, H0530, G16800, G36400, G41020, G60660

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Referenced in: [Joshua 13 General Notes](#); [Joshua 17 General Notes](#)

Promised Land

Facts:

The term "Promised Land" only occurs in the Bible stories, not the Bible text. It is an alternate way of referring to the land of Canaan which God had promised to give to Abraham and his descendants.

- When Abram was living in the city of Ur, God commanded him to go live in the land of Canaan. He and his descendants, the Israelites, lived there for many years.
- When a severe famine caused there to be no food in Canaan, the Israelites moved to Egypt.
- Four hundred years later, God rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt and brought them back to Canaan again, the land God had promised to give them.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "Promised Land" can be translated as the "land that God said he would give to Abraham" or "land that God promised to Abraham" or "land God promised to his people" or "land of Canaan."
- In the Bible text, this term occurs as some form of "the land God promised."

(See also: [Canaan](#), [promise](#))

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 8:1-2
- Ezekiel 7:26-27

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **12:1** They (Israelites) were no longer slaves, and they were going to the **Promised Land**!
- **14:1** After God had told the Israelites the laws he wanted them to obey as part of his covenant with them, God began leading them from Mount Sinai toward the **Promised Land**, which was also called Canaan.
- **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.
- **14:14** Then God led the people to the edge of the **Promised Land** again.
- **15:2** The Israelites had to cross the Jordan River to enter into the **Promised Land**.
- **15:12** After this battle, God gave each tribe of Israel its own section of the **Promised Land**.
- **20:9** This period of time when God's people were forced to leave the **Promised Land** is called the Exile.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0776, H3068, H3423, H5159, H5414, H7650

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Referenced in: [Introduction to Joshua](#); [Joshua 2 General Notes](#); [Joshua 4 General Notes](#)

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term “sin” refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God’s will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don’t know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God’s will are called “sinful.”
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a “sinful nature,” a nature that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A “sinner” is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word “sinners” was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn’t keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term “sinner” was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “sin” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “disobedience to God” or “going against God’s will” or “evil behavior and thoughts” or “wrongdoing.”
- To “sin” could also be translated as to “disobey God” or to “do wrong.”
- Depending on the context “sinful” could be translated as “full of wrongdoing” or “wicked” or “immoral” or “evil” or “rebellious against God.”
- Depending on the context the term “sinner” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “person who sins” or “person who does wrong things” or “person who disobeys God” or “person who disobeys the law.”
- The term “sinners” could be translated by a word or phrase that means “very sinful people” or “people considered to be very sinful” or “immoral people.”
- Ways to translate “tax collectors and sinners” could include “people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people” or “very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors.”
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don’t see or know about.
- The term “sin” should be general, and different from the terms for “wickedness” and “evil.”

(See also: [disobey](#), [evil](#), [flesh](#), [tax collector](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1-3
- 1 John 1:10
- 1 John 2:2
- 2 Samuel 7:12-14
- Acts 3:19
- Daniel 9:24
- Genesis 4:7
- Hebrews 12:2
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 18:23
- Leviticus 4:14
- Luke 15:18
- Matthew 12:31

- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- **13:12** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- **20:1** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- **35:1** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- **48:8** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- **49:17** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0817, H0819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G02640, G02650, G02660, G02680, G03610, G37810, G39000, G42580

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Referenced in: [Joshua 7 General Notes](#); [Joshua 9 General Notes](#)

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