



unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Numbers

Version 77

[en]

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Table of Contents

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes	7
Numbers	7
Introduction to Numbers	8
Numbers 1	10
Numbers 2	65
Numbers 3	100
Numbers 4	152
Numbers 5	202
Numbers 6	234
Numbers 7	262
Numbers 8	352
Numbers 9	379
Numbers 10	403
Numbers 11	440
Numbers 12	476
Numbers 13	493
Numbers 14	527
Numbers 15	573
Numbers 16	615
Numbers 17	666
Numbers 18	680
Numbers 19	713
Numbers 20	736
Numbers 21	766
Numbers 22	802
Numbers 23	844
Numbers 24	875
Numbers 25	901
Numbers 26	920
Numbers 27	986
Numbers 28	1010
Numbers 29	1042
Numbers 30	1083
Numbers 31	1100
Numbers 32	1155
Numbers 33	1198
Numbers 34	1255
Numbers 35	1285
Numbers 36	1320
unfoldingWord® Translation Academy	1334
Abstract Nouns	1335
Active or Passive	1337
Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information	1340
Background Information	1344
Biblical Distance	1347
Biblical Money	1350
Biblical Volume	1352
Biblical Weight	1355

Copy or Borrow Words	1357
Direct and Indirect Quotations	1359
Double Negatives	1361
Doublet	1364
Ellipsis	1366
Euphemism	1369
Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'	1371
First, Second or Third Person	1373
Forms of You	1375
Fractions	1376
Go and Come	1378
Hebrew Months	1380
How to Translate Names	1383
Hyperbole	1387
Hypothetical Situations	1391
Idiom	1394
Litotes	1396
Merism	1398
Metaphor	1400
Metonymy	1406
Numbers	1408
Ordinal Numbers	1411
Parallelism	1414
Personification	1417
Possession	1419
Predictive Past	1422
Pronouns	1424
Rhetorical Question	1426
Simile	1429
Symbolic Action	1432
Symbolic Language	1434
Synecdoche	1436
Translate Unknowns	1438
unfoldingWord® Translation Words	1441
anoint, anointed, anointing	1442
census	1443
clean, wash	1444
faith	1446
faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy	1448
firstfruits	1450
god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry	1451
grace, gracious	1453
inherit, inheritance, heir	1454
just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification	1456
Passover	1458
priest, priesthood	1460
promise, promised	1462
Promised Land	1463
sin, sinful, sinner, sinning	1464
tabernacle	1466

Contributors	1467
unfoldingWord® Translation Notes Contributors	1467
unfoldingWord® Literal Text Contributors	1473
unfoldingWord® Simplified Text Contributors	1474
unfoldingWord® Translation Academy Contributors	1475
unfoldingWord® Translation Words Contributors	1475
unfoldingWord® Translation Words Links Contributors	1476



unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Numbers

Introduction to Numbers

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Numbers

Preparing to leave Sinai (1:1–10:10)

- Counting and assembling the tribes (1:1–4:49)
- Regulations (5:1–6:27)
- Dedicating the altar (7:1–89)
- Setting up the lampstand (8:1–4)
- Setting apart the Levites (8:5–29)
- Second Passover; the cloud to lead them; trumpets (9:1–10:10)

Sinai to Moab, through the wilderness (10:11–17:13)

- Complaining and murmuring (10:11–11:15)
- The quails (11:16–35)
- Miriam's leprosy (12:1–16)
- The spies selected and sent (13:1–14:45)
- Commands (15:1–41)
- Korah's rebellion (16:1–17:13)

The Priests and purifying (18:1–19:22)

- Priests and Levites (18:1–32)
- The law about purifying (19:1–22)

Conflicts (20:1–21:35)

- Miriam's death (20:1–13)
- Edom's refusal and Aaron's death (20:14–29)
- Journey to Moab (21:1–35)

The Plains of Moab (22:1–36:13)

- Balaam (22:1–24:25)
- Baal Peor (25:1–18)
- The second counting (26:1–65)
- Inheritance rights for daughters (27:1–11)
- Joshua succeeds Moses (27:12–23)
- Offerings and women's vows (28:1–30:16)
- Midianite war (31:1–54)
- Across the Jordan (32:1–42)
- The people set up camp (33:1–56)
- Land west of the Jordan; cities for Levites and cities of refuge (34:1–35:34)
- Female heirs marry (36:1–13)

What is the Book of Numbers about?

The Book of Numbers tells about the people of Israel as they traveled from Mount Sinai in the wilderness to the Jordan River. While traveling, the Israelites became discouraged. So they rebelled against the leaders whom God had given them. At the Jordan River, the people of Israel refused to enter the Promised Land. Because the Israelites

were afraid and did not trust God, he delayed their entry into the Promised Land for forty years (13:1–14:45). (See: **Promised Land (p.1463)**)

How should the title of this book be translated?

The title of this book, “Numbers,” refers to when the number of the Israelites was counted. The people of the project language may already be familiar with the name “Numbers” from other Bible versions. If not, the translator could consider a clearer name for the book, such as “The Counting of the People of Israel.” (See: **census (p.1443)**)

Who wrote the Book of Numbers?

The writers of both the Old and New Testament present Moses as being very involved with writing the Book of Numbers. However, at a later time, scribes and priests probably put the book into its present form. They may have included text from other sources. One such source was “the scroll of the Wars of Yahweh” (21:14).

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How does Numbers present the idea of the whole community being responsible when only a few people sinned?

The people understood and assumed that God would punish the whole community of Israel if some of the people rebelled against him. God did often punish the entire nation when some of them sinned. All of the people in the ancient Near East would have understood and expected this. However, Moses and Aaron prayed for God to punish only those who were guilty.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Why does Moses speak using third person pronouns about himself?

When an author wrote about something he was involved in, it was common for him to use the pronoun “he” instead of “I,” or “they” instead of “we.” The translator may decide to use the project’s normal pronouns instead.

Numbers 1

Numbers 1 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULT sets the lines in 1:5-15 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are long lists.

Census

They counted how many men of military age were in each tribe of Israel. These men would also become the heads of families. It is possible the numbers in this chapter are rounded to the nearest 100.

Numbers 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.

on one of the second month

This is the **second month** of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of April on Western calendars. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

second & second

Both occurrences of the word **second** are the ordinal forms of “two.” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

the second year

Alternate translation: “year 2” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Numbers 1:2

Count them by name

This means to count the men by recording their names. Alternate translation: “Count them, recording each man’s name” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 1:3

twenty years old

Alternate translation: "20 years old" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

record the number of men in their armed groups

This refers to assigning the men to their military divisions.

Numbers 1:4

a clan head

Alternate translation: "a leader of a clan"

serve with you

Alternate translation: "help you"

Numbers 1:5

Elizur & Shedeur

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 1:6

Shelumiel & Zurishaddai

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 1:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:16

the men appointed

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 men whom Yahweh appointed” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:17

took these men

Alternate translation: "gathered these men together"

who were recorded by name

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: "whose names they had recorded" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:18

on one of the second month

This is the **second month** of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of April on Western calendars. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:1](#). (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

second

The word **second** is the ordinal form of “two.” See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:1](#). (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Then each man & identified his ancestry. He had to name the clans and families descended from his ancestors

The second sentence means basically the same thing as the first and is added for clarification. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

He had to name

Here “name” means to “say.” Alternate translation: “Each man had to say” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 1:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:20

were counted all the names

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 counted all the names” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

able to go to war

Alternate translation: “who was able to go to war”

Numbers 1:21

46,500 men

Alternate translation: "forty-six thousand five hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:22

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:23

59,300 men

Alternate translation: "fifty-nine thousand three hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:24

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:25

45,650 men

Alternate translation: "forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:26

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:27

74,600 men

Alternate translation: "seventy-four thousand six hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:28

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:29

54,400 men

Alternate translation: "fifty-four thousand four hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:30

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:31

57,400 men

Alternate translation: "fifty-seven thousand four hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:32

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:33

40,500 men

Alternate translation: "forty thousand five hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:34

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:35

32,200 men

Alternate translation: "thirty-two thousand two hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:36

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:37

35,400 men

Alternate translation: "thirty-five thousand four hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:38

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:39

They counted 62,700

Alternate translation: "They counted sixty-two thousand seven hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:40

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:41

They counted 41,500

Alternate translation: "They counted forty-one thousand five hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:42

were counted all the names of each and every man & clans and families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “they counted all the names of each and every man ... clans and families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:43

They counted 53,400

Alternate translation: "They counted fifty-three thousand four hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:44

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:45

So all the men of Israel & were counted in each of their families

The phrase “were counted” can be stated in active form. This long phrase is repeated multiple times in the census. See how you translated it in [Numbers 1:20](#). Alternate translation: “So they counted all the men of Israel ... in each of their families” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:46

603,550 men

Alternate translation: "six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 1:47

the men who were descended from Levi were not counted

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 and Aaron did not count the men who were descended from Levi” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

who were descended from Levi

In some languages this is a passive verb. If needed, this can be written differently. Alternate translation: “who were from the tribe of Levi” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:48

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 1:49

must not count the tribe of Levi

Here the "tribe of Levi" refers to all of the men in the tribe of Levi. Alternate translation: "must not count the men of the tribe of Levi" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 1:50

the tabernacle of the covenant decrees

The tabernacle was also called by this longer name because the ark with the law of God was placed inside it.

everything in it

Here “it” refers to the tabernacle.

The Levites must carry the tabernacle

It was their job to carry the tabernacle when they traveled. Alternate translation: “When you travel, the Levites must carry the tabernacle” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

make their camp around it

This means that they were to set up their tents around the tabernacle. Alternate translation: “set up their tents around it” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 1:51

When the tabernacle is to be set up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "When it is time to set up the tabernacle" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Any stranger & must be killed

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: "Any stranger ... must die" or "You must kill any stranger who comes near the tabernacle" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 1:52

the banner

a large flag

his armed group

Alternate translation: "his military division"

Numbers 1:53

the tabernacle of the covenant decrees

The tabernacle was also called by this longer name because the ark with the law of God was placed inside it. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:50](#).

so that my anger does not come upon the people of Israel

Here Yahweh speaks of not punishing the Israelites as his anger not coming upon them. The phrase “come upon” refers to his anger being applied to them. Alternate translation: “so that in my anger I do not punish the people of Israel” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 1:54

Yahweh commanded through Moses

Yahweh had commanded Moses everything that the Israelites were to do, and then Moses had commanded the Israelites. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 2

Numbers 2 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Camping

Moses told each tribe where to camp. They were each given a specific area in which to stay.

Numbers 2:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 2:2

around his standard

The “standards” were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together. The standards was represented by a banner.

with the banners of their fathers’ houses

Each extended family also had a banner under with the camp, which was within the area designated for their standard.

banners

A banner is a large flag.

Numbers 2:3

under their standard

The “standards” were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together, and was represented by a banner. See how you translated “standards” in [Numbers 2:2](#).

Nahshon son of Amminadab

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:7](#).

Numbers 2:4

74,600

Alternate translation: "seventy-four thousand six hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 2:5

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:8](#).

Numbers 2:6

division

This is a military term for a large group of soldiers. Each tribe was its own “division.”

54,400 men

Alternate translation: “fifty-four thousand four hundred men” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 2:7

Eliab son of Helon

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:9](#).

Numbers 2:8

are} 57, 400

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “fifty-seven thousand four hundred” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 57, 400

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: “are 57,400 men” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:9

are} 186, 400

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “are one hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

the camp of Judah

This refers to the three tribes that camp east of the tent of meeting: the tribes of Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

They will set out first

This means that when the Israelite camp moves, the camp of Judah will start walking out before the other tribes do. Alternate translation: “When traveling, the camp of Judah will start walking first” or “When the Israelites leave, those tribes will leave first” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 2:10

under their standard

The “standards” were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together. The standards were represented by a banner. See how you translated “standards” in [Numbers 2:2](#).

Elizur son of Shedeur

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:5](#).

Numbers 2:11

are} 46, 500

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: "are forty-six thousand five hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 46, 500

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "are 46,500 men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:12

Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:6](#).

Numbers 2:13

are} 59, 300

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: "are fifty-nine thousand three hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 59, 300

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "59,300 men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:14

Eliasaph son of Deuel

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:14](#).

Numbers 2:15

are} 45, 650

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: "are forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty" (See: **Numbers (p. 1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 45, 650

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "are 45,650 men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p. 1366)**)

Numbers 2:16

are} 151, 450

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “are one hundred and fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 151, 450

This refers to the men. Alternate translation: “are 151,450 men” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

And they will set out second

This means that when the Israelite camp moves, the camp of Reuben will start walking out after the camp of Judah goes out. Alternate translation: “When traveling, the camp of Reuben will start walking second” or “When the Israelites leave, those tribes will leave next” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

And they will set out second

The word **second** is the ordinal form of “two.” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Numbers 2:17

the tent of meeting must go out & in the middle of all the camps

This means that the tent of meeting must be carried by the Levites in the middle of the tribes as they travel.

They must go out

Alternate translation: "They" refers to the twelve tribes.

by his banner

Each man does not have his own personal banner; rather, this refers to the banner belonging to his tribe. Alternate translation: "by his tribe's banner" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 2:18

under their standard

The “standards” were four larger groups that the tribes were divided into. Each standard was commanded to camp together. The standards were represented by a banner. See how you translated “standards” in [Numbers 2:2](#).

Numbers 2:19

are} 40, 500

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “are forty thousand five hundred” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 40, 500

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: “are 40,500 men” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:20

Next to them

This means that the tribe of Manasseh will set out next, after the tribe of Ephraim.

Numbers 2:21

are} 32, 200

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: "are thirty-two thousand two hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 32, 200

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "are 32,200 men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:22

Abidan son of Gideoni

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:11](#).

Numbers 2:23

are} 35, 400

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “are thirty-five thousand four hundred” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 35, 400

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: “are 35,400 men” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:24

are} 108,100

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “are one hundred and eight thousand one hundred” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 108,100

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: “are 108,100 men” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

And they will set out third

The word **third** is the ordinal form of “three.” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

And they will set out third

This means that when the Israelite camp moves, the camp of Ephraim will start walking out after the camp of Judah and the camp of Reuben go out. Alternate translation: “And when traveling, the camp of Ephraim will start walking third” or “When the Israelites leave, those tribes will leave next” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 2:25

the divisions of the camp of Dan

The this refers to the divisions of Dan, Asher, and Naphthali that are under the standard of Dan. Alternate translation: “the divisions that camp under the standard of Dan” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:12](#).

Numbers 2:26

are} 62, 700

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: "are sixty-two thousand seven hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 62, 700

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "are 62,700 men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:27

Pagiel son of Okran

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:13](#).

Numbers 2:28

are} 41, 500

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: "are forty-one thousand five hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 41, 500

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "are 41,500 men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:29

Ahira son of Enan

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:15](#).

Numbers 2:30

are} 53, 400

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: "are fifty-three thousand four hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 53, 400

This refers to the number of men. Alternate translation: "are 53,400 men" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 2:31

are} 157, 600

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “are one hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

are} 157, 600

This number includes all of the men in the tribes that camped under the standard of Dan. Alternate translation: “are 157,600 men” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 2:32

All those counted

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 and Aaron counted them all" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

by their divisions

Here "their" refers to the people of Israel.

are 603,550

Alternate translation: "are six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 2:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 2:34

They went out from the camp

This refers to when they would travel to another place. Alternate translation: "When they traveled, they went out from the camp" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 3

Numbers 3 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The tribe of Levi

The Levites were given a special function in Israel. They belonged to or were specially dedicated to serve Yahweh. They were to be priests and because of this were held to a higher standard than the rest of Israel. Only one of Aaron's sons survived because the others offered improper sacrifices. This tribe had a lot of responsibility during this time. (See: **priest, priesthood (p.1460)**)

Numbers 3:1

Now

Here the author uses the word “now” to shift to telling a new historical account.

Numbers 3:2

Nadab the firstborn

Alternate translation: "Nadab, who was the firstborn"

Nadab & Abihu & Ithamar

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 3:3

the priests who were anointed and who were ordained

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 priests whom Moses anointed and ordained" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 3:4

Nadab & Abihu & Ithamar

See how you translated these men's names in [Numbers 3:2](#).

fell dead before Yahweh

The phrase “fell dead” means to suddenly die. Alternate translation: “suddenly died before Yahweh” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

before Yahweh

This refers to Yahweh's presence, meaning that Yahweh saw everything that happened. Alternate translation: “in Yahweh's presence” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

they offered to him unacceptable fire

Here the word “fire” is used to refer to “burning incense.” Alternate translation: “they burned an incense offering in a way that Yahweh did not approve of” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 3:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:6

Bring the tribe of Levi

Here the word "tribe" refers to the men in the tribe. Alternate translation: "Bring the men of the tribe of Levi" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 3:7

on behalf of

This means to do something for someone else, as a representative for them. Alternate translation: “for”

Numbers 3:8

help the tribes of Israel

Here the "tribes of Israel" refer to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "help the people of Israel" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

they must help the tribes of Israel to carry out the tabernacle service

The phrase "carry out" means to "serve." Alternate translation: "they must help the tribes of Israel by serving in the tabernacle" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

tabernacle service

Alternate translation: "work of the tabernacle"

Numbers 3:9

You must give

Alternate translation: "You" refers to Moses.

They are wholly given

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 have given them entirely" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 3:10

any foreigner who comes near must 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: “you must kill any foreigner who comes near” or “any foreigner who comes near must die” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

but any foreigner who comes near

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: “but any foreigner who comes near the tabernacle” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 3:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:12

Look

Alternate translation: "Listen" or "Pay attention to what I am about to tell you"

I have taken the Levites

Alternate translation: "I have chosen the Levites"

Numbers 3:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:15

Count the descendants

Yahweh was commanding Moses to only count the male descendants. Alternate translation: “Count the male descendants” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 3:16

following the word of Yahweh, just as he was commanded to do

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are used together to emphasize that he obeyed Yahweh.
(See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 3:17

General Information:

General Information:

This is a list of the descendants of Levi. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 1383)**)

Numbers 3:18

The clans coming from

Here the author speaks of "descending" as if it were "coming." Alternate translation: "The clans descending from" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 3:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:21

come from Gershon

Here the author speaks of “descending” as if it were “coming.” Alternate translation: “descend from Gershon” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Libnites & Shimeites & Gershonites

Alternate translation: “Libnites” and “Shimeites” are the name of clans, named after the head of their family. The “Gershonites” is the name of people who descended from Gershon. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 3:22

All the males from a month old and older were counted

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 counted all the males from a month old and older" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

7,500

Alternate translation: "seventy-five hundred" or "seven thousand five hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 3:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:24

Eliasaph & Lael

These are the names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 3:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:26

the courtyard hangings

Alternate translation: "the curtains in the courtyard"

the courtyard that surrounds the sanctuary and the altar

Alternate translation: "that is, the courtyard that surrounds the sanctuary and the altar"

Numbers 3:27

General Information:

General Information:

This is a list of clans that descended from Kohath. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Kohath

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

Numbers 3:28

8,600 males have been counted

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 counted 8,600 males" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

8,600 males

Alternate translation: "eight thousand six hundred males" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

aged one month old and older

Alternate translation: "from a month old and older"

Numbers 3:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:30

General Information:

General Information:

These verses give us information about the clans that descended from Kohath. (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 3:31

the holy things that are used in their service

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 holy things which the priests use for service” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 3:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:33

General Information:

General Information:

This is a list of clans that descended from Merari. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 3:34

6,200 males have been counted

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 counted 6,200 males" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

6,200 males

Alternate translation: "six thousand two hundred males" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 3:35

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:36

the framing

This to the panels that they made by joining together smaller pieces of wood.

crossbars

These are support beams that give stability to the structure.

posts

A post is a strong piece of wood set upright and used as a support.

bases

The bases held the posts in place.

hardware

This means everything used to join the crossbars, posts, and bases together.

Numbers 3:37

with their sockets

Here “their” refers to the “pillars and posts.”

sockets, pegs, and ropes

These are all items used secure the pillars and posts into place.

Numbers 3:38

his sons

Here “his” refers to Aaron

toward the sunrise

This is the east side of the tabernacle. Alternate translation: “on the east side, where the sun rises” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

for the fulfillment of the duties

The word “fulfilment” is an abstract noun that can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: “to perform the duties” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Any foreigner who approaches the sanctuary must 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: “You must kill any foreigner who approaches the sanctuary” or “Any foreigner who approaches the sanctuary must die” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 3:39

twenty-two thousand men

Alternate translation: "22,000 men" or "22,000 males" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 3:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:41

the livestock of the Levites

This refers to all the Levites' livestock. Alternate translation: "you must take all the Levites' livestock" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 3:42

all the firstborn people

Alternate translation: "all the firstborn sons"

Numbers 3:43

22,273 men

Alternate translation: "twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 3:44

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 3:46

for the redemption of

The noun “redemption” can be translated with the verb “redeem.” Alternate translation: “to redeem” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

273 firstborn

Alternate translation: “two hundred and seventy-three firstborn” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

firstborn people of Israel

Alternate translation: “firstborn sons of Israel”

who exceed the number of the Levites

This means that there are 273 more firstborn males among the other tribes of the Israelites than there are total number of Levite males.

Numbers 3:47

five, & shekels

A shekel is a unit of weight equal to about 11 grams. Alternate translation: “about 55 grams of silver” (See: **Biblical Money (p.1350)**) (See: **Biblical Money (p.1350)**)

You must use the shekel of the sanctuary as your standard weight

This means that the shekel must weight the same as those in the sanctuary. Alternate translation: “You must use the weight of the shekels in the sanctuary as your stand weight” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

20 gerahs

A **gerah** is a unit of weight equal to about .57 kilograms. (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 3:48

the price of redemption that you paid

Here the word "price" refers to the shekels that Moses collected. Alternate translation: "the money that you collected for their redemption" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 3:49

of redemption from

The noun “redemption” can be translated with the verb “redeem.” Alternate translation: “to redeem” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 3:50

1, 365 by the shekel of the holy place

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “one thousand three hundred and sixty-five shekels of the sanctuary” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

1, 365 by the shekel of the holy place

A **shekel** is 11 grams. Alternate translation: “about 15 kilograms of silver according to the weight of the sanctuary shekel” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 3:51

the redemption money

This refers to the money that Moses collected.

to his sons

Here "his" refers to Aaron

in accordance with the mouth of Yahweh, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

in accordance with the mouth of Yahweh

Here, **the mouth of Yahweh** represents what Yahweh said. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "just as Yahweh had said" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 4

Numbers 4 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Counting the Levites by clans

Moses gave special instructions for each of the families of the tribes of Levi. Each family was given a special role in the ministry of the tabernacle. (See: **tabernacle (p.1466)**)

Numbers 4:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 4:2

Kohath

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

Numbers 4:3

thirty to fifty years old

Alternate translation: “30 to 50 years old” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

join the company

The word “company” refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting.

Numbers 4:4

reserved for me

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 I have specially selected for myself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 4:5

When the camp prepares

Here "camp" refers to all of the people in the camp. Alternate translation: "When the people prepare" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

to move forward

This refers to the people moving to another location. Alternate translation: "to move to another location" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

cover the ark of the testimony with it

The word "it" refers to the curtain that separated the most holy place from the holy place.

Numbers 4:6

insert the poles

The poles were inserted into rings on the sides of the ark so that the poles could be used to carry the ark. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: “insert the poles into the rings on the ark’s sides” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 4:7

the bread of the presence

This bread represents the presence of Yahweh. Alternate translation: “the bread of Yahweh’s presence” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

On it they must put

Here “it” refers to the blue cloth.

bowls, and jars for pouring

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: “bowls and jars used to pour out drink offerings” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Bread must always continue to be

There must always be bread”

Numbers 4:8

They are to spread over them

Here the word "them" refers to "the dishes, spoons, bowls, and jars" (verse 7).

scarlet cloth

Alternate translation: "red cloth"

insert poles

The poles were inserted into rings on the corners of the table so that the poles could be used to carry the table.

This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "insert poles into the rings at the corners of the table" (See:

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340))**)

Numbers 4:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 4:10

They must put & into a covering of fine leather

Alternate translation: "They must cover ... with fine leather"

they must put it on a carrying frame

Alternate translation: "they must place all of these things on a frame for carrying them"

Numbers 4:11

insert the carrying poles

The poles were inserted into rings on the sides of the altar so they could be used to carry it. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "insert the carrying poles into the rings on the sides of the altar" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 4:12

the carrying frame

a wooden rectangle made with poles used to carry things

for the work in the holy place

The word “work” is an abstract noun that can be expressed with the verb “serving.” Alternate translation: “used when serving Yahweh in the holy place” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 4:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 4:14

in the work of the altar

The word “work” is an abstract noun that can be expressed with the verb “serving.” Alternate translation: “when serving at the altar” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

insert the carrying poles

The poles were inserted into rings on the sides of the altar so they could be used to carry it. This can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: “insert the carrying poles into the rings on the sides of the altar” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 4:15

to carry the holy place

Here the holy place refers to all the items that make up the holy place that Aaron and his sons covered in cloth and skins. Alternate translation: “to carry all of the items of the holy place” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

when the camp moves forward

Here the word “camp” refers to all of the people in the camp. Alternate translation: “when the people move forward” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Kohath

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

the holy instruments

Alternate translation: “the holy equipment”

Numbers 4:16

the oil for the light

Here the word "light" is used to refer to the "lamps." Alternate translation: "the oil for the lamps" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

the care of

Here If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **care**, you can express the same idea with a verb. Alternate translation: "those who care for" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 4:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 4:18

Do not let the tribe of the clans of the Kohathite be cut off from the midst of the Levites

This phrase refers to the death of the Kohathites. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Do not let the tribe of the clans of the Kohathite be cut off from the midst of the Levites

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: "Do not do anything that will cause me to completely remove the tribe of the clans of the Kohathite from among the Levites" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 4:19

by doing this

This phrase refers to what Yahweh says next. Moses will protect the Kohathites by not allowing them to go in and see the holy place.

Numbers 4:20

Kohathites

This refers to the descendants of Kohath. See how you translated this in [Numbers 3:27](#).

to his work, to his special tasks

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)
(See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 4:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 4:22

of the descendants of Gershon

This refers only to men. Alternate translation: “of the male descendants of Gershon” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Gershon

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

Numbers 4:23

thirty years old to fifty years old

Alternate translation: “30 years old to 50 years old” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

join the company to serve in the tent of meeting

The word “company” refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 4:3](#).

Numbers 4:24

This is the work of the clans & when they serve and what they carry

This sentence is a description that tells us what the following verses are about.

Gershonites

This refers to the descendants of Gershon. See how you translated this in [Numbers 3:21](#).

Numbers 4:25

the covering of fine leather hides that is on it

This is an outer covering that is placed on top of the tent of meeting's covering. Alternate translation: "the covering of fine leather hides that is placed on top of that" or "the outer covering made of fine leather hides" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 4:26

Whatever should be done with these things

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “Whatever work that these things require” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 4:27

must direct all the service of the descendants of the Gershonites

Alternate translation: "must tell the descendants of the Gershonites how they are to serve Yahweh in the tent of meeting"

Numbers 4:28

This is the service of the clans of the descendants of the Gershonites for the tent of meeting

Here the word “service” is an abstract noun that can be expressed by a verb. Here the word “This” refers to what Yahweh just said. Alternate translation: “This is how the clans of the descendants of the Gershonites will serve in the tent of meeting” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Ithamar

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:2](#).

Numbers 4:29

the descendants of Merari

This refers only to men. Alternate translation: “the male descendants of Merari” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Merari

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

order them

Alternate translation: “list them”

Numbers 4:30

thirty years old & fifty years old

Alternate translation: “30 years old ... 50 years old” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

join the company and serve in the tent of meeting

The word “company” refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 4:3](#).

Numbers 4:31

This is their responsibility

Alternate translation: "This" refers to what Yahweh says next.

crossbars, posts, and sockets

These are all parts of the framing of the tabernacle. See how you translated all of these parts in [Numbers 3:36-37](#).

Numbers 4:32

their sockets, pegs, and their ropes, with all their hardware

Here “their” refers to the posts of the court.

sockets, pegs, and their ropes

These are all parts of the framing of the tabernacle. See how you translated all of these parts in [Numbers 3:36-37](#).

List by name the articles they must carry

Alternate translation: “List by each man’s name the articles he must carry”

Numbers 4:33

under the direction of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest

The word “direction” is an abstract noun that is expressed by a verb. Alternate translation: “as Ithamar son of Aaron the priest directs them” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Ithamar

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:2](#).

Numbers 4:34

the descendants of the Kohathites

The refers to men. Alternate translation: “the male descendants of the Kohathites” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Kohathites

This refers to the descendants of Kohath. See how you translated this in [Numbers 3:27](#).

Numbers 4:35

thirty years old & fifty years old

Alternate translation: “30 years old ... 50 years old” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

everyone who would join the company

Here the word “would” does not mean that the men “chose” to join the company but rather that they were “assigned” to the company. Alternate translation: “everyone who was assigned to join the company” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

join the company to serve in the tent of meeting

The word “company” refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 4:3](#).

Numbers 4:36

2,750 men

Alternate translation: "two thousand seven hundred and fifty men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 4:37

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 4:38

The descendants of Gershon

This refers to the men. Alternate translation: "The male descendants of Gershon" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

The descendants of Gershon were counted

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 and Aaron counted the descendants of Gershon" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 4:39

from thirty to fifty years old

Alternate translation: "from 30 to 50 years old" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

everyone who would join the company

Here the word "would" does not mean that the men "chose" to join the company but rather that they were "assigned" to the company. Alternate translation: "everyone who was assigned to join the company" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

join the company to serve in the tent of meeting

The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 4:3](#).

Numbers 4:40

counted by 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: “whom Moses and Aaron counted by their clans” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

2, 630

This refers to 2,630 men. Alternate translation: “2,630 men” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

2, 630

You can state this in words. Alternate translation: “two thousand six hundred and thirty” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 4:41

they obeyed

The word “they” refers to Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 4:42

The descendants of Merari were counted

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 and Aaron counted the descendants of Merari" (See:

Active or Passive (p.1337)) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 4:43

from thirty to fifty years old

Alternate translation: "from 30 to 50 years old" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

everyone who would join the company

Here the word "would" does not mean that the men "chose" to join the company but rather that they were "assigned" to the company. Alternate translation: "everyone who was assigned to join the company" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

join the company to serve in the tent of meeting

The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 4:3](#).

Numbers 4:44

counted by 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: “whom Moses and Aaron counted by their clans” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

numbered 3,200

Alternate translation: “numbered three thousand two hundred” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 4:45

they obeyed

The word “they” refers to Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 4:46

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 4:47

from thirty to fifty

This refers to men. Alternate translation: “men from thirty to fifty” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

from thirty to fifty

Alternate translation: “from 30 to 50” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 4:48

8,580 men

Alternate translation: "eight thousand five hundred and eighty men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 4:49

At Yahweh's command

Alternate translation: "As Yahweh commanded"

keeping count of each by the type & He counted each man by the kind of responsibility he would bear

These two phrase have similar meaning and are used together to emphasize how Moses counted all the men.

by the type of work he was assigned to do

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: "by his type of work assignment" or "by the type of work he had assigned each man to do" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

he would bear

Alternate translation: "he would have"

they obeyed what Yahweh had commanded them

Here "they" and "them" refer to Moses and Aaron.

Numbers 5

Numbers 5 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Israel's camp

Israel's entire camp was to be a "clean" place. This meant that people who could not be made acceptable to God were not allowed inside the camp. (See: **clean, wash (p.1444)**)

Vengeance

There are several laws in this chapter regarding restitution. These laws were meant to limit the ways in which people who had been wronged could seek to be compensated. These laws were intended to make it difficult for such people to avenge a wrong when they were angry. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/avenge\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/jealous\]\]](#))

Numbers 5:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 5:2

infectious skin disease

This refers to leprosy, which is a sickness that affects the skin and easily spreads to other people.

oozing sore

This refers to an open cut that is leaking fluids.

whoever is unclean through touching a dead body

If a person touched a dead body they were considered unclean. A person who is not acceptable for God's purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 5:3

you must send

Here “you” is plural and refers to the people of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 5:4

The people of Israel did so

This means that they sent the unclean people away. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit.

Alternate translation: "The people of Israel sent those who were unclean out of the camp" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 5:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 5:6

any sin such as people do to one another

Alternate translation: "any sin that people usually commit against one another"

is unfaithful to me

If someone sins against another person, it means that they have also sinned against Yahweh and Yahweh considers that person as unfaithful to him. Alternate translation: "they have also wronged me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 5:7

the price of his guilt

Here the person's "sin" is referred to as his "guilt." Alternate translation: "what is considered a suitable amount of money for the wrong that he has done" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

add to the price one-fifth more

This means the person must pay an extra one-fifth of the price that he owes.

one-fifth

This is one part out of five equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

Numbers 5:8

But if the wronged person has no close relative to receive the payment

Usually the wronged person would receive the payment but if that person has died the payment goes to the closest relative. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "But if the wronged person has died and has no close relative to receive the payment" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

if the wronged person

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: "if the person whom the guilty person has wronged" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

he must pay the price for his guilt to me through a priest

If a person made a payment to a priest to pay for his guilt it was the same as if the person had made the payment to Yahweh.

to atone for himself

The atonement is made for the man's sin. Here Yahweh refers to the man's sin as the man who committed it. Alternate translation: "to atone for his sin" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 5:9

the things that are set aside and brought to the priest by the people of Israel

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 things that the people of Israel set aside and bring to the priest” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 5:10

The offerings of every person will be for the priest; if anyone gives anything to the priest, it will belong to him

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and may be combined to state that the offerings that someone gives belong to the priest to whom they have been given. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 5:11

The words “Suppose that a man's wife turns away” begin a long description of a hypothetical situation, something that has not happened but might happen. Yahweh tells Moses what to do if it does happen. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**)

Numbers 5:12

a man's wife turns away

This means that she goes away from him and is unfaithful to him. Alternate translation: "a man's wife is unfaithful" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

sins against her husband

This means that she is unfaithful to her husband and sins against him by sleeping with another man. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "sins against her husband by sleeping with another man" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 5:13

If a man lies with her

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: "If a man has sexual relations with her" (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

her

the woman who turns away and sins against her husband ([Numbers 5:12](#))

in the act

This refers to the act of adultery. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "in the act of adultery" or "sleeping with him" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 5:14

his wife is defiled & his wife is not defiled

These phrases can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: "his wife has defiled herself ... his wife has not defiled herself" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

and a spirit of jealousy passes over upon him & a spirit of jealousy comes over upon him

Here the word **spirit** refers to a person's attitude and emotions. Alternate translation: "the husband might feel jealous and become suspicious" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

and a spirit of jealousy passes over upon him & a spirit of jealousy comes over upon him

The man's **jealously** is spoken of as if it were a person who spoke to him. (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

and a spirit of jealousy passes over upon him & a spirit of jealousy comes over upon him

The idea of the spirit "coming on him" means that he began to have these jealous feelings. Alternate translation: "and a man might feel jealous ... a man might feel jealous" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 5:15

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

Moses begins to describe what the people are to do if the hypothetical situation he began describing in [Numbers 5:12](#) ever happens.

a tenth

This is one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

a tenth of an ephah

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “a tenth of an ephah (which is about 2 liters)” or “2 liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

a grain offering of jealousy

Alternate translation: “a grain offering for jealousy”

a reminder of the iniquity

A “reminder” is something that shows evidence that something had occurred that required justice. In this case, he made the offering to determine whether his wife had committed adultery or not.

Numbers 5:16

near and place her before Yahweh

The priest would bring her near the altar. Alternate translation: "near the altar and place her in the presence of Yahweh" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 5:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 5:18

before Yahweh

Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh"

grain offering of suspicion

See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 5:15](#).

Numbers 5:19

no other man has lain with you

This is a euphemism. Alternate translation: “no other man has had sexual relations with you” (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

if you have not gone astray

The words “gone astray” is an idiom that means “to be unfaithful.” Alternate translation: “if you have not been unfaithful to your husband” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

and committed impurity

This phrase refers to committing adultery. Alternate translation: “by committing impurity”

you will be free from this bitter water

The phrase to “be free” from something means to not be harmed by it. Alternate translation: “this bitter water will not harm you, though it is able to” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

this bitter water that can bring a curse

Here the bitter water is described as being able to bring a curse. This means that when the woman drinks the water it cause her to be unable to bear children, if she is guilty. Alternate translation: “this bitter water can be a curse to you” (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

Numbers 5:20

have gone astray

The words “gone astray” is an idiom that means “to be unfaithful.” Alternate translation: “have been unfaithful to your husband” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 5:21

that can bring down a curse on her

The phrase “bring down a curse” is an idiom meaning for a curse to come upon her. Alternate translation: “that can cause a curse to come upon her” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Yahweh will make you into a curse & your people to be such

Here the author speaks about the woman bearing the curse that Yahweh gives her, which causes other people to curse her. This is spoken of as if the woman herself becomes a curse. Alternate translation: “Because Yahweh curses you, other people will curse you as well, and Yahweh will show people that you are truly cursed” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

that will be shown to your people to be such

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 he will show to your people as a curse” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

your thigh to waste away and your abdomen to swell

This could mean: (1) that the woman will become unable to have children or (2) that the woman’s pregnancy will end too early and the baby will die.

your thigh to waste away

Here the word “thigh” is a polite way of referring to the woman’s womb or her private parts. Alternate translation: “your womb to be useless” (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

Numbers 5:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 5:23

he must wash away the written curses

This means that he is to wash the ink off of the scroll.

the written curses

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 curses he has written” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 5:24

General Information:

General Information:

Verse 24 explains in a general way what the priest must do and what is expected to happen when the woman drinks the water. Verse 25 and 26 explains in detail how the priest is to do this work. The priest gives the water to the woman and she drinks it only once.

Numbers 5:25

grain offering of jealousy

See how you translated this in [Numbers 5:15](#). Alternate translation: “a grain offering for jealousy”

Numbers 5:26

a representative offering

The handful of the grain offering represents the whole grain offering. This means the whole offering belongs to Yahweh.

Numbers 5:27

if she is defiled because she has committed

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: “if she has defined herself by committing” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

committed a sin

Here the “sin” refers specifically to committing adultery. The meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “committed adultery” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Her abdomen will swell and her thigh will waste away

This could mean: (1) that the woman will become unable to have children or (2) that the woman’s pregnancy will end too early and the baby will die. Here the word “thigh” is a polite way of referring to the woman’s womb or her private parts. (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) See how you translated these concepts in [Numbers 5:21](#). (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

The woman will be cursed among her people

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: “Her people will curse her” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 5:28

is not defiled

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: “has not defiled herself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

if she is clean

Here “being innocent” is spoken of as “being clean.” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

then she must be free

This could mean: (1) “then she will not be cursed” or (2) “then she is free from guilt.” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

conceive children

Alternate translation: “become pregnant”

Numbers 5:29

the law of jealousy

Alternate translation: "the law for dealing with jealousy"

who strays away from her husband

The words "strays away" is an idiom that means "to be unfaithful." Alternate translation: "who is unfaithful to her husband" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

is defiled

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: "defiles herself" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 5:30

a spirit of jealousy

This phrase refers to the man's attitude and emotions of jealousy. See how you translated this in [Numbers 5:14](#).

Alternate translation: "who is jealous" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

when he is jealous of his wife

This is an idiom that means that he suspects that his wife has been unfaithful to him by sleeping with another man.

Alternate translation: "and suspects that his wife has been unfaithful to him" or "and suspects that his wife has slept with another man" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

before Yahweh

Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh"

Numbers 5:31

will be free from guilt for bringing his wife to the priest

Alternate translation: "will not be guilty of doing something wrong by bringing his wife to the priest"

must bear

Alternate translation: "must endure"

Numbers 6

Numbers 6 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Nazirite vow

The Nazirite vow was a special type of vow between a person and Yahweh. This chapter gives the rules for people to be consecrated to God as Nazirites. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/vow\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/consecrate\]\]](#))

Numbers 6:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 6:2

separates himself

Alternate translation: "To separate yourself to someone" means to "dedicate yourself" to that person. Alternate translation: "dedicates himself" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 6:3

he must keep himself from

This idiom means that he must not eat or drink them. Alternate translation: “he must not consume” (See: **Idiom (p. 1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

vinegar made from wine

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: “vinegar that people make from wine” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

vinegar

a drink produced when wine and other strong drinks ferment too long and become sour

or from strong drink

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: “or vinegar that people make from strong drink” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

raisins

dried grapes

Numbers 6:4

he is separate

Alternate translation: "To separate yourself to someone" means to "dedicate yourself" to that person. Alternate translation: "he dedicates himself" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

he is separate to me

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: "he separates himself to me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

nothing that is made from grapes

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: "nothing that people make from grapes" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

from the seeds to their skins

These two extremes are given to emphasize the entire grape may not be eaten. Alternate translation: "from any part of a grape" (See: **Merism (p.1398)**) (See: **Merism (p.1398)**)

Numbers 6:5

vow of separation

This is an idiom. Here "separation" means "dedication." Alternate translation: "vow of dedication" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

no razor is to be used on his head

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "no one is to use a razor on his head" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

the days of the vow of his separation

Here, **separation** is an idiom that means "dedication." Alternate translation: "the days of the vow of his dedication" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

the days of the vow of his separation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **** separation***, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: "the days that he has promised to dedicated himself to Yahweh" or "the days that he has promised to serve Yahweh" (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-abstractnouns\]\]](#)) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

to Yahweh are fulfilled

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 Yahweh are complete" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

He must be set apart to 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: "He must set himself apart to Yahweh" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 6:6

separates

This is an idiom for dedication. Alternate translation: “dedicates” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 6:7

separated

This is an idiom for dedication. Alternate translation: “dedicated” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

unclean

A person who is not acceptable for God’s purposes is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

he is separated

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: “he has separated himself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 6:8

separation

This is an idiom for dedication. Alternate translation: “dedication” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

of his separation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **separation**, you can express the same idea with a verb. Alternate translation: “that he has separated himself”

reserved for 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: “he has reserved himself for Yahweh” or “set apart for Yahweh” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 6:9

defiles his consecrated head

Here “head” represents the Nazirite man’s hair, which symbolizes his vow. Alternate translation: “defiles his long hair which shows everyone he is separated to God” or “he becomes defiled” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

the seventh day

Alternate translation: “day 7” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Numbers 6:10

the eighth day

Alternate translation: "day 8" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Numbers 6:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 6:12

for the days of his consecration

Alternate translation: "during the time he is being set apart again"

He must bring a male lamb & as a guilt offering

The man is to bring the lamb to the priest so that it can be sacrificed. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "He must bring a male lamb one year old to the priest as a guilt offering" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

The days before he defiled himself must not be counted

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: "He must not count the days before he defiled himself" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

his consecration was defiled

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: "he defiled himself" or "he made himself unacceptable" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 6:13

the days of his separation

Here, **separation** is an idiom that means “dedication.” Alternate translation: “the days of his dedication” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

the days of his separation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **** separation***, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: “the days when he dedicates himself to Yahweh” or “the period when he has served Yahweh” (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-abstractnouns\]\]](#)) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

He must be brought

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: “Someone must bring him” or “He must go” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 6:14

He must present his offering to Yahweh

He must bring his offering to the priest to be sacrificed to Yahweh. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “He must present his offering to Yahweh by bringing it to the priest to be sacrificed” or “He must present his offering to Yahweh by bringing it to the priest who will sacrifice it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 6:15

bread made without yeast

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: “bread he made without yeast” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

wafers without yeast rubbed with oil

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: “wafers without yeast which he rubbed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

wafers without yeast

small pieces of flat bread

together with their grain offering and drink offerings

The word “their” refers to the other offerings that the Nazirite man was told to bring. Often grain offerings and drink offerings were required to accompany other types of sacrifices. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “together with the grain offering and drink offering that Yahweh required to accompany the other offerings” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 6:16

He must offer his sin offering

Alternate translation: "He" refers to the priest and "his" refers to the man who took a vow.

Numbers 6:17

the fellowship offering

Alternate translation: "as the fellowship offering"

The priest must present also & drink offering

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "The priest must present also ... the drink offering to Yahweh" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 6:18

his separation & his separation

Here, **his separation** is an idiom that means “his dedication.” Alternate translation: “indicating his dedication ... indicating his dedication” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

his separation & his separation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind both instances of the word **separation**, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: “indicating how he has separated himself ... indicating how he has separated himself” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 6:19

the boiled shoulder of the ram

This means that he had boiled the ram's shoulder. 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 shoulder of the ram that he boiled" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

his separation

Here, the abstract noun **separation** can be expressed with the verb "dedicated." Alternate translation: "indicating his dedication" or "indicating that he has dedicated himself to Yahweh" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 6:20

The priest must wave them

After handing the items to the Nazirite, the priest takes them back to offer them to Yahweh. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Then the priest must take them back and wave them" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

together with

Alternate translation: "as well as"

that was waved

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 priest waved" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

that was presented

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 he presented" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 6:21

his separation, & his separation

Here, **separation** is an idiom that means “dedication.” Alternate translation: “his dedication ... his dedication” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

his separation, & his separation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **separation**, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: “having dedicated himself to Yahweh ... having dedicated himself to Yahweh” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Whatever else he may give

This refers to the Nazirite deciding to give other offering beyond what he has been commanded to give. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “If he decides to give any additional offerings” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

he must keep the obligations of the vow he has taken

Alternate translation: “he must still obey the requirements of the vow he has taken”

he must keep the obligations & to keep the promise indicated by the law for the Nazirite

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize that he must obey the obligations of his vow. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

the promise indicated by the law for the Nazirite

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 promise that the law for the Nazirite indicates” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 6:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 6:23

You must bless the people of Israel

Alternate translation: "You" is plural. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 6:24

May Yahweh bless you and keep you

Here “you” is singular. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

keep you

This is an idiom. Here “keep” means to “protect.” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 6:25

make his face shine on you

This is an idiom which means to have kind intentions towards someone. It can also be expressed by smiling.
Alternate translation: “smile at you” or “look at you with kindness” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

on you & to you

Here “you” is singular. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 6:26

look on you with favor

Here the phrase “look on” means to show a certain attitude towards that person. Alternate translation: “show you favor” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

on you & give you

Here “you” is singular. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 6:27

they must give my name

Here Yahweh speaks about claiming the Israelites as his own by saying that he is giving them “his name.” Alternate translation: “they must let the people of Israel know that they are mine” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 7

Numbers 7 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Consecrating the altar

When the tabernacle was completed, they consecrated the altar. Each tribe brought an offering to consecrate the altar. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/tabernacle\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/consecrate\]\]](#))

Numbers 7:1

Moses completed the tabernacle

Alternate translation: "Moses finished setting up the tabernacle"

Numbers 7:2

the leaders of Israel & the heads of their ancestor's families

These two phrases describe the same group of people two different ways. Alternate translation: "the leaders of Israel who are also the heads of their ancestors families" (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

the heads of their ancestor's families

Here the leaders of the families are referred to as "heads." Alternate translation: "the leaders of their ancestor's families" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

had overseen the counting of the men

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **counting**, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: "had helped Aaron and Moses to count the men" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 7:3

They brought their offerings before Yahweh & They presented these things in front of the tabernacle

This means that they gave their offerings to Yahweh and brought them to the tabernacle. These phrases may be combined to add clarity. Alternate translation: "They brought their offerings to Yahweh and presented them to him in front of the tabernacle" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

six covered carts and twelve oxen

Alternate translation: "6 covered carts and 12 oxen" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 7:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:5

to each one as his work needs them

Alternate translation: "to each man as he needs them for his work"

Numbers 7:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:7

Gershon

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

because of what their work needed

Alternate translation: "because it was what they needed to do their work"

Numbers 7:8

Merari

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

in the care of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest

Alternate translation: "under the supervision of Ithamar son of Aaron the priest" or "Ithamar son of Aaron the priest oversaw their work"

Ithamar

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:2](#).

He did this because

The word "he" refers to Moses.

because of what their work required

Alternate translation: "because it was what they needed to do their work"

Numbers 7:9

none of those things

This refers to the carts and oxen.

Kohath

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

theirs would be the work

Alternate translation: "their work would be"

the things that belong to Yahweh

You can make explicit the implicit meaning of what belongs to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the things that Yahweh reserved for the tabernacle" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 7:10

offered their goods

Alternate translation: "offered gifts"

Numbers 7:11

Each leader must offer on his own day his sacrifice

Alternate translation: "Each day, one leader must offer his sacrifice"

Numbers 7:12

the first day

Alternate translation: “day 1” or “day number 1” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Nahshon son of Amminadab

These are the names of men. See how you translated these names in [Numbers 1:7](#)

Numbers 7:13

its weight was 130

If necessary, this weight can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “weighing nearly one and a half kilograms” or “weighing one kilogram and 430 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70 shekels

If necessary, this weight can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “one silver bowl weighing nearly eight tenths of a kilogram” or “one silver bowl weighting 770 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. If you are converting the weights to modern measures, here is another way to translate this phrase. Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:14

one gold dish that weighed ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “one gold dish that weighed one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish that weighed 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:17

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Nahshon son of Amminadab

Alternate translation: "This was what Nahshon son of Amminadab presented"

Nahshon son of Amminadab

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:7](#).

Numbers 7:18

the second day

Alternate translation: “day 2” or “day number 2” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:8](#).

Numbers 7:19

its weight was 130

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70 shekels

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

one silver bowl of 70 shekels

If necessary, these weights can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “one silver bowl weighing nearly eight tenths of a kilogram” or “one silver bowl weighting 770 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:20

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:23

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Nethanel son of Zuar

Alternate translation: "This was what Nethanel son of Zuar presented"

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:8](#).

Numbers 7:24

the third day

Alternate translation: “day 3” or “day number 3” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Eliab son of Helon

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:9](#).

Numbers 7:25

its weight was 130

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:26

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:29

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Eliab son of Helon

Alternate translation: "This was what Eliab son of Helon gave as a sacrifice"

Eliab son of Helon

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:9](#).

Numbers 7:30

the fourth day

Alternate translation: “day 4” or “day number 4” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Elizur son of Shedeur

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:5](#).

Numbers 7:31

its weight was 130

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70 shekels

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:32

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:35

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Elizur son of Shedeur

Alternate translation: "This was what Elizur son of Shedeur gave as a sacrifice"

Elizur son of Shedeur

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:5](#).

Numbers 7:36

the fifth day

Alternate translation: “day 5” or “day number 5” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:6](#).

Numbers 7:37

אֶה מִשְׁקָלָהּ

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

בְּעֵיִם שֶׁקֶל

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:38

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:39

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:41

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

"Shelumiel" and "Zurishaddai" are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:6](#).

Numbers 7:42

the sixth day

Alternate translation: "day 6" or "day number 6" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Eliasaph son of Deuel

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:14](#).

Numbers 7:43

ים ומֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in 7:13. (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70

See how you translated **70 shekels** in 7:13. (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:44

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:46

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:47

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Eliasaph son of Deuel

Alternate translation: "This was what Eliasaph son of Deuel gave as a sacrifice"

Eliasaph son of Deuel

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:14](#).

Numbers 7:48

the seventh day

Alternate translation: "day 7" or "day number 7" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Elishama son of Ammihud

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:10](#).

Numbers 7:49

יָמִים וּמֵאָה מִשְׁקָלָהּ

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70 shekels

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:50

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:51

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:52

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:53

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Elishama son of Ammihud

Alternate translation: "This was what Elishama son of Ammihud presented"

Elishama son of Ammihud

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:10](#).

Numbers 7:54

the eighth day

Alternate translation: “day 8” or “day number 8” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Gamaliel son of Pedahzur

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:10](#).

Numbers 7:55

וּמִאֲהָ מִשְׁקָלָהּ

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70 shekels

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:56

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:57

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:58

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:59

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur

Alternate translation: "This was what Gamaliel son of Pedahzur gave as a sacrifice"

Gamaliel son of Pedahzur

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:10](#).

Numbers 7:60

the ninth day

Alternate translation: “day 9” or “day number 9” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Abidan son of Gideoni

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:11](#).

Numbers 7:61

its weight was 130

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

שְׁקָלָיו

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mingled with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:62

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:63

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:64

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:65

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Abidan son of Gideoni

Alternate translation: "This was what Abidan son of Gideoni gave as a sacrifice"

Abidan son of Gideoni

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:11](#).

Numbers 7:66

the tenth day

Alternate translation: “day 10” or “day number 10” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:12](#).

Numbers 7:67

its weight was 130

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70 shekels

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:68

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:69

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:70

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:71

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

Alternate translation: "This was what Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai gave as a sacrifice"

Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:12](#).

Numbers 7:72

the eleventh day

Alternate translation: “day 11” or “day number 11” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Pagiel son of Okran

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:13](#).

Numbers 7:73

its weight was 130

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

שִׁמְשֵׁם שֶׁקֶל

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mingled with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:74

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:75

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:76

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:77

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Pagiel son of Okran

"Pagiel" and "Okran" were names of men. See how you translated their names in [Numbers 1:13](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 7:78

the twelfth day

Alternate translation: “day 12” or “day number 12” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Ahira son of Enan

See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 1:15](#).

Numbers 7:79

its weight was 130

See how you translated **its weight was 130** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

70 shekels

See how you translated **70 shekels** in [7:13](#). (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour that he had mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:80

one gold dish weighing ten shekels

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. See how you translated these same weights in [Numbers 7:14](#). Alternate translation: “one gold dish weighing one tenth of a kilogram” or “one gold dish weighting 110 grams” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 7:81

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:82

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:83

that were a year old

Alternate translation: "that were each one year old"

This was the sacrifice of Ahira son of Enan

Alternate translation: "This was what Ahira son of Enan gave as a sacrifice"

Ahira son of Enan

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:15](#).

Numbers 7:84

set all these apart

The phrase “set apart” means to be dedicated to a specific purpose. In this case, the offerings were dedicated to Yahweh. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

on the day that Moses anointed the altar

Here the word “day” refers to a general period of time. The leaders of Israel dedicated these things over the course of 12 days. Alternate translation: “when Moses anointed the altar”

Numbers 7:85

was 130

See how you translated **was 130** in [7:13](#). Alternate translation: “was 130 shekels” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

One & and & bowl was 70

See how you translated “70 shekels” in [7:13](#). Alternate translation: “was 70 shekels” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

2,400 shekels

Alternate translation: “two thousand four hundred shekels” or “twenty-four hundred shekels” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

by the standard weight of the sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 7:13](#). Alternate translation: “measured by the standard weights used in the sanctuary” (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

All the silver vessels weighed

Alternate translation: “All the silver vessels together weighed”

the silver vessels

This refers to all of the offerings that were made of silver, both the platters and the bowls.

Numbers 7:86

All the gold dishes weighed

Alternate translation: "All the gold dishes together weighed"

was 120

If necessary, this can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "was one tenth of a kilogram" or "weighed 110 grams" (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

120 shekels

Alternate translation: "one hundred and twenty shekels" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 7:87

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 7:88

a year old

Alternate translation: "that were one year old"

after it was anointed

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: "after Moses had anointed it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 7:89

he heard his voice speaking to him

Here "his voice" refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "he heard Yahweh speaking to him" (See: **Synecdoche (p. 1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

from above the atonement lid & from between the two cherubim

These two phrases describe the same location. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

ark of the testimony

See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 4:5](#).

He spoke to him

Alternate translation: "Yahweh spoke to Moses"

Numbers 8

Numbers 8 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The consecration of the tabernacle continues in this chapter. The people obeyed Yahweh's exact instructions. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/consecrate\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/tabernacle\]\]](#))

Numbers 8:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 8:2

must give light in front

Alternate translation: "must shine towards the front"

Numbers 8:3

to give light

Alternate translation: "to shine"

Numbers 8:4

The lampstand was made

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 had made the lampstand" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

with hammered cups like blossoms

They were commanded to form the hammered cups so that they resembled flower blossoms. Alternate translation: "with hammered cups that resemble flower blossoms" (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 8:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 8:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 8:7

to purify them

Here “them” refers to the Levites.

Sprinkle the water of atonement on them

Moses sprinkling water on them was symbolic of their atonement. Alternate translation: “Sprinkle on their the water that symbolizes atonement” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

wash their clothes

The Levites are supposed to wash their own clothes. You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: “then make them wash their clothes” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 8:8

a young bull and its grain offering

When offering a young bull, a grain offering was usually required to accompany it.

of fine flour mingled with oil

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: "of fine flour that they have mingled with oil" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 8:9

assemble the whole community

Alternate translation: "gather the whole community"

Numbers 8:10

before Yahweh

Here Yahweh refers to himself by his own name.

the people of Israel must lay their hands on the Levites

The action “laying on hands” on someone was often done to dedicate them to Yahweh’s work or service. Alternate translation: “The people Israel must lay their hands on the Levites, dedicating them to me” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 8:11

as a wave offering

Aaron was to present the Levites to Yahweh with the same amount of dedication as if they were a sacrifice given to him. Alternate translation: "if they were a wave offering" (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 8:12

The Levites must place their hands on the heads of the bulls

This is a symbolic action that identifies the Levites with the animals being offered. In this way the person is offering himself through the animal to Yahweh. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 8:13

lift them up as a wave offering to me

Aaron was to present the Levites to Yahweh as if he were lifting up an offering to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "dedicate them to me, as if you were lifting them up a wave offering to me" (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 8:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 8:15

You must purify them. You must offer them as a wave offering

Yahweh repeats these things to emphasize their importance. This must happen before the Levites go to serve at the tent of meeting. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "But first, you must purify them. You must offer them as a wave offering" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

You must offer them as a wave offering

Aaron was to present the Levites to Yahweh as if they were a wave offering to him. Alternate translation: "You must dedicate them to me, as if you were presenting a wave offering to me" (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 8:16

each male child who opens the womb, the firstborn

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasize the firstborn sons. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

male child who opens the womb

This is an idiom. "To open the womb" means to give birth for the first time. Here this refers to the first male child to which a mother gives birth. Alternate translation: "child who is the firstborn son of his mother" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 8:17

I took the lives

This is a polite way of referring to when a person kills someone. Alternate translation: "I killed" (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

I set them apart

Here "them" refers to "the firstborn from among the people of Israel."

Numbers 8:18

I have taken the Levites & instead of all the firstborn

The idea of “taking” is understood from the first part of the sentence and can be repeated in the second. Alternate translation: “I have taken the Levites ... instead taking all of the firstborn” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 8:19

I have given the Levites as a gift to Aaron and his sons

Yahweh appointing the Levites to help Aaron and his sons is spoken of as if they were a gift that Yahweh were giving to Aaron and his sons. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

I have taken them & I have given them

Here “them” refers to the Levites.

when they come near

Here “they” refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 8:20

Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of the people of Israel & The people of Israel did this with them

Here there are three parallel sentences that give the same information. It is repeated to emphasize that the people did to the Levites as Yahweh had commanded. Alternate translation: "Moses, Aaron, and the whole community of the people of Israel did with the Levites everything that Yahweh had commanded Moses concerning the Levites" (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 8:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 8:22

to do their service

The word “service,” an abstract noun, can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: “to serve” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

before Aaron and before Aaron’s sons

Alternate translation: “in the presence of Aaron and his sons”

This was

Alternate translation: “What they did was”

They treated all the Levites in this way

The word “They” refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “They did to the Levites what Yahweh commanded”

Numbers 8:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 8:24

All of this is for the Levites

Alternate translation: "All of these commandments are for the Levites"

twenty-five years old

Alternate translation: "25 years old" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

must join the company to serve in the tent of meeting

The word "company" refers to the rest of the people working in the tent of meeting. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 4:3](#).

Numbers 8:25

at the age of fifty years

Alternate translation: “at 50 years old” or “when they become 50 years old” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 8:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 9

Numbers 9 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Passover

This chapter records the celebration of the Passover for the first time since it began. The people kept the Passover as directed by the Lord. (See: **Passover (p.1458)**)

Numbers 9:1

in the first month of the second year after they came out from the land of Egypt

This means that they had come out of Egypt a year earlier. They were beginning their second year in the wilderness. (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

in the first month

This is the **first month** of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God brought the people of Israel out of Egypt. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

after they came out from the land of Egypt

Here “they” refers to the people of Israel. The phrase “came out” means to leave. Alternate translation: “after they left the land of Egypt” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 9:2

Let the people & at its fixed time of year

The word “fixed” means “previously set.” This means that this is when the observe it every year. Alternate translation: “Let the people ... at the time of year they currently observe it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 9:3

On the fourteenth day & at its fixed time of year

This is the set time of year that they celebrate the Passover. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "On the fourteenth day ... and observe it, for this is the time you do celebrate it every year" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

the fourteenth day

Alternate translation: "day 14" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

follow all the regulations, and obey all the decrees

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined to emphasize that they needed to obey the commands. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

You must keep it

Here the phrase "keep it" is an idiom which means to observe it. Alternate translation: "You must observe it" or "You must celebrate it" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 9:4

keep the Festival of the Passover

Here the word "keep" means to observe. Alternate translation: "observe the Festival of the Passover" or "celebrate the Festival of the Passover" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 9:5

in the first, on day 14 of the month

This refers to time in the Jewish calendar. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

Numbers 9:6

became unclean by the body of a dead man

This implies that they touched the dead man, which made them unclean. You can make clear the full meaning of this statement. Alternate translation: “became unclean because they touched the body of a dead man” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

keep the Passover

Here the word “keep” means to observe. Alternate translation: “observe the Passover” or “celebrate the Passover” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 9:7

because of the dead body of a man

This means that they had touched a dead man's body. You can make the full meaning of this statement clear.

Alternate translation: "because we have touched the body of a dead man" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Why do you keep us from offering the sacrifice & among the people of Israel?

The men ask this question in order to complain that they are not allowed to participate in celebrating the Passover. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "It is not fair that you keep us away from offering the sacrifice ... among the people of Israel." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

fixed

set or predetermined

Numbers 9:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 9:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 9:10

unclean

A person who God considers spiritually unacceptable or defiled is spoken of as if the person were physically unclean. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

because of a dead body

This refers to someone touching a dead body. Alternate translation: “because you have touched a dead body” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

keep the Passover

Here the word “keep” means to observe. Alternate translation: “observe the Passover” or “celebrate the Passover” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 9:11

eat the Passover

Here the word “eat” means to observe. Alternate translation: “observe the Passover” or “celebrate the Passover” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

In the second month on day 14

This refers to time in the Jewish calendar. Alternate translation: “day 14 of month 2” (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

at evening

Alternate translation: “at sunset”

with bread that is made without yeast

Alternate translation: “with bread that contains no yeast”

bitter herbs

These are small plants that have a strong and usually bad taste.

Numbers 9:12

or break any of its bones

Alternate translation: "and they must not break any of its bones"

Numbers 9:13

any person who is clean

A person who God considers spiritually acceptable is spoken of as if the person were physically clean. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

keep the Passover

Here the word "keep" means to observe. Alternate translation: "observe the Passover" or "celebrate the Passover" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

now that person shall be cut off

Here the phrase **cut off** means to be disowned and sent away. Alternate translation: "and that person must be sent away" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

now that person shall be cut off

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 you must send that person away" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

fixed

set or predetermined

That man must carry his sin

Here the concept of the man having to bear the consequences of his sin is spoken of as if his sin were a heavy object that he had to carry. Alternate translation: "That man must bear the punishment for his sin" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 9:14

lives among you

Here “you” is plural and refers to the people of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

he must keep it according to the statute of the Passover and according to its rule

The words “statute” and “rule” mean basically the same thing and are used together to emphasize that the stranger must obey all of the rules about the Passover. Alternate translation: “that stranger must keep it and do all that Yahweh has commanded concerning the Passover” (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

in the land

Alternate translation: “in the land of Israel”

Numbers 9:15

the tabernacle was set up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “the Levites set up the tabernacle” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**)

the tent of the covenant decrees

This is another name for the tabernacle. See how you translated the phrase “the tabernacle of the covenant decrees” in [Numbers 1:50](#).

It appeared like fire until morning

This refers to the cloud's appearance during the night. Here the cloud is compared to looking like a fire. Alternate translation: “During the night the cloud looked like a huge fire until morning” (See: **Simile (p. 1429)**) (See: **Simile (p. 1429)**)

Numbers 9:16

It continued that way

It may be helpful to explain that this refers to the cloud being over the tabernacle. Alternate translation: “The cloud remained this way over the tabernacle” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

appeared like fire at night

The cloud’s appearance is compared to a huge fire. Alternate translation: “it looked like a huge fire at night” (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 9:17

the cloud was taken up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “moved” or “Yahweh took up the cloud” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

the cloud stopped

Alternate translation: “the cloud stopped moving”

Numbers 9:18

At Yahweh's command

The word "command" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "When Yahweh commanded" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 9:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 9:20

on the tabernacle

Alternate translation: "over the tabernacle"

make camp

Here the word "make" means to "set up." Alternate translation: "set up their camp" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 9:21

from evening until morning

This means that the cloud only stayed over the tabernacle for one night. You make clear the full meaning of this statement. Alternate translation: “only from evening until morning” or “over the tabernacle for only one night” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

If it continued

The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. “If the cloud stayed over the tabernacle” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

only when the cloud lifted would they journey on

Alternate translation: “then after the cloud moved they would travel”

Numbers 9:22

the cloud was taken up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “the cloud rose up” or “Yahweh took up the cloud” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 9:23

at Yahweh's command

The word "command" can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "what Yahweh commanded" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Yahweh's command given through Moses

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 command that Yahweh had given through Moses" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 10

Numbers 10 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Trumpets

In the ancient Near East, trumpets were used for many purposes. They were used to call people together. They were also used to lead people into battle.

Israel starts to move

Each tribe had its place in line as did the tabernacle. Their movements through the desert were very deliberate and ordered. (See: **tabernacle (p.1466)**)

Numbers 10:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 10:2

Make two silver trumpets

This means that Yahweh commanded Moses to have someone make the trumpet. He did not make them himself. Alternate translation: "Tell someone to make two silver trumpets" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

You must use the trumpets

Moses will not blow the trumpets himself, but he will command the priests to blow them. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 10:3

in front of you

This means that Moses was to be there with the priest when he blew the trumpets. Alternate translation: “while you are present”

Numbers 10:4

the leaders, the heads of the clans of Israel

These two phrases refer to the same group of people. Here the second phrase is used to describe the first phrase.

Alternate translation: "the leaders, who are the heads of the clans of Israel" (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See:

Parallelism (p.1414))

Numbers 10:5

and you shall blow a blast

Here the word **you** is plural. Yahweh is speaking to Moses, but he is referring to the priests. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

and you shall blow a blast

The priests will blow the trumpets, Moses will not. Alternate translation: "And they shall blow a blast" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 10:6

and you shall blow a second blast

Here the word **you** is plural. Yahweh is speaking to Moses, but he is referring to the priests. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

and you shall blow a second blast

The priests will blow the trumpets, Moses will not. Alternate translation: "And they shall blow a second blast" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

the second time

Alternate translation: "time number 2" or "again" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

They must blow a loud signal for their journeys

Alternate translation: "They" refers to the priests and the word "their" refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 10:7

When the community gathers together

Alternate translation: "To gather the community together"

Numbers 10:8

be a regulation for you

Here “you” is plural and refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “be a rule for you” (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 10:9

When you go to war & oppresses you

Yahweh is speaking to Moses and uses the word “you,” but he is actually referring the people of Israel going to war. Alternate translation: “When the people of Israel to war ... oppresses Israel” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

then you must sound an alarm with the trumpets

Here Yahweh again speaks to Moses using the word “you” but actually wants Moses to have the priests blow the trumpets. Alternate translation: “then you must command the priests to sound an alarm with the trumpets” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

call you to mind

This phrase “call to mind” means to remember. Alternate translation: “remember you” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 10:10

of celebration

The noun “celebration” can be expressed with the verb “celebrate.” Alternate translation: “when you celebrate” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

you must blow the trumpets

Here Yahweh again speaks to Moses using the word “you,” but actually wants him to have the priests blow the trumpets. Alternate translation: “you must command the priests to blow the trumpets” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**), (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

at the beginnings of the months

There are 12 months on the Hebrew calendar. The beginning phase of the moon with its sliver of light marked the beginning of each month in the lunar calendar. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

your burnt offerings & your fellowship offerings & you to me

In these phrases the words “your” and “you” are plural and refer to the people of Israel. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

over the sacrifices

Alternate translation: “in honor of the sacrifices”

will act as a reminder of you to me

The word “reminder” can be expressed with the verb “remind.” Alternate translation: “will always remind you of me” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

These will act

The word “these” refers to the trumpets and the sacrifices.

Numbers 10:11

In the second year

This refers to the second year after Yahweh brought the Israelites out of Egypt. Alternate translation: "In year 2" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

second & in the & month, on 20 in the month

The word **second** is the ordinal form of "two." Alternate translation: "on day 20 of month 2" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

second & in the & month, on 20 in the month

This is the **second month** of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: "on day 20 of month 2" (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

the cloud was lifted

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 cloud rose up" or "Yahweh lifted the cloud" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

the tabernacle of the covenant decrees

The tabernacle was also called by this longer name because the ark with the law of God was placed inside it. See how you translated this in [Numbers 1:50](#).

Numbers 10:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 10:13

Yahweh's command given through Moses

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 commands that Yahweh had given through Moses” (See:

Active or Passive (p.1337)) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 10:14

The camp under the banner of Judah's descendants

This camp includes the three tribes under the division of Judah: Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

went out first

They packed up their camp and they left that place before all the others left. (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)
(See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

Nahshon son of Amminadab

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:7](#).

Numbers 10:15

Nethanel son of Zuar

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:8](#).

Numbers 10:16

Eliab son of Helon

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:9](#).

Numbers 10:17

Gershon & Merari

See how you translated these men's names in [Numbers 3:17](#).

Numbers 10:18

the armies under the banner of Reuben's camp

This refers to the armies of the tribes under the division of Reuben: Reuben, Simeon, and Gad.

Elizur son of Shedeur

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:5](#).

Numbers 10:19

Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai

See how you translated this man's name [Numbers 1:6](#).

Numbers 10:20

Eliasaph son of Deuel

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:14](#).

Numbers 10:21

Kohathites

This refers to the descendants of Kohath. See how you translated this in [Numbers 3:27](#).

Numbers 10:22

The armies under the banner of Ephraim's descendants

This refers to the armies of the tribes under the division of Ephraim: Ephraim, Manasseh, and Benjamin.

Elishama son of Ammihud

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:10](#).

Numbers 10:23

Gamaliel son of Pedahzur

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:10](#).

Numbers 10:24

Abidan son of Gideoni

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:11](#).

Numbers 10:25

The armies that camped under the banner of Dan's descendants

This refers to the armies of the tribes under the division of Dan: Dan, Asher, and Naphtali.

Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:12](#).

Numbers 10:26

Pagiel son of Okran

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:13](#).

Numbers 10:27

Ahira son of Enan

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 1:15](#).

Numbers 10:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 10:29

Hobab son of Reuel

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

that Yahweh described

Alternate translation: "that Yahweh described to us"

we will do you good

Alternate translation: "we will treat you well"

Numbers 10:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 10:31

You must watch out for us

The phrase “watch out” means to guide and to take care of. Alternate translation: “You can guide us and show us how to live in the desert” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 10:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 10:33

They journeyed

Alternate translation: "They" refers to the people of Israel.

the mountain of Yahweh

This refers to Mount Sinai. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "Mount Sinai, the mountain of Yahweh" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

The ark of the covenant of Yahweh went before them

The group of Levites carrying the ark of the covenant went before the people of Israel as they traveled. Alternate translation: "Men carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh before them as they traveled" (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

Numbers 10:34

by daylight

Alternate translation: "every day" or "during the day"

Numbers 10:35

Whenever the ark set out

Here the ark is spoken of as if were a person traveling. The ark was really being carried by men. Alternate translation: "Whenever the people carrying the ark set out" (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

Rise up, Yahweh

Here the phrase "rise up" is a request for Yahweh to act, in this case Moses is asking him to scatter their enemies. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Make those who hate you run from you

Here Moses speaks about Yahweh causing their enemies to flee from the people of Israel as if they were fleeing from Yahweh himself. Alternate translation: "Make those who hate you run away from your ark and your people" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 10:36

Whenever the ark stopped

Here the ark is spoken of as if were a person traveling. The ark was really being carried by men. Alternate translation: "Whenever the people carrying the ark stopped" (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

many tens of thousands

This refers to people. The full meaning of this statement can be made explicit. Alternate translation: "many tens of thousands of people" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 11

Numbers 11 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Complaining

Moses complained about having too much responsibility. Therefore, God gave seventy men the spirit of prophecy to help Moses. The people complained about food, even though Yahweh was miraculously providing them with their food. The people complained because they did not have meat or fish to eat. God sent them quail. He punished some of the people, but it does not say why God did this. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/spirit\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/prophet\]\]](#))

Numbers 11:1

Fire from Yahweh burned

Alternate translation: "Yahweh sent fire that burned"

Numbers 11:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:3

That place was named

This can be stated in the active form. Alternate translation: "They named that place" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 11:4

Who will give us meat to eat?

The Israelites ask this question in order to complain and to express their desire for something other than manna to eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "We wish that we had meat to eat." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 11:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:6

our appetite is gone

Alternate translation: "we do not want to eat" or "we cannot eat"

Numbers 11:7

coriander seed

Coriander is also known as cilantro. This seed serves as a spice when dried.

resin

This is a sticky substance with a pale yellow color.

Numbers 11:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:10

in Moses' eyes

he eyes represent seeing, and seeing represents thoughts or judgment. Alternate translation: "in Moses' opinion" or "in Moses' judgement" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 11:11

General Information:

General Information:

Moses complains to Yahweh using several rhetorical questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Why do you do evil to your servant

Moses speaks of himself in the third person. Alternate translation: "Why do you do evil to me?" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1373)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1373)**)

Why do you do evil to your servant? And why have I not found favor in your eyes, by putting the burden of all this people on me

Moses used these questions to complain about the way God was treating him. They can be expressed as statements. Alternate translation: "You should not treat me, your servant, so badly. You should not be angry with me by making me responsible for what all these people have done!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

You make me carry the load of all these people

Moses complains and speaks of leading the people and providing for them as if he were carrying a heavy load. Alternate translation: "You make me responsible for all these people, but it's too hard for me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 11:12

Did I conceive all these people?

Moses used this question to remind God that Moses was not their father. Alternate translation: "I am not the father of all these people." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Have I given them birth so that you should say to me, 'Carry & baby?'

Moses wants God to remember that God told him to take care of the Israelites even though Moses was not their father. Alternate translation: "I have not given them birth, so you have no right to say to me, 'Carry ... baby!'" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Carry them closely to your chest

To take care of the Israelites is spoken of as if it were to carry a helpless newborn baby. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Should I carry them & to give them?

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not expect me to carry them ... to give them!" or "I am not able to carry them ... to give them!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 11:13

Where can I find meat to give to all this people?

Moses used this question to complain that it was impossible for him to give meat to all the people. Alternate translation: "I cannot possibly find enough meat to give to all these people." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 11:14

I cannot bear all these people alone

Moses speaks of leading and providing for the people as if he were carrying them. Alternate translation: "I cannot provide for all these people alone" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

They are too much for me

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: "This responsibility is too difficult for me" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 11:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:17

some of the Spirit that is on you

The "Spirit" here represents the power that God's Spirit had given to Moses so that Moses could do what God told him to do. Alternate translation: "some of the power that the Spirit has given you" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

They will bear the burden of the people with you

God speaks of the responsibility of leading and providing for the people as if it were a burden that Moses and the leaders would carry. Alternate translation: "They will help you care for the people" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

You will not have to bear it alone

God speaks of the responsibility of leading and providing for the people as if it were a burden that Moses and the leaders would carry. Alternate translation: "You will not care for them alone" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 11:18

Who will give us meat to eat?

The Israelites had asked this question in order to complain and to express their desire for something other than manna to eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "We wish that we had meat to eat." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 11:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:20

until it comes out of your nostrils

This could mean: (1) God speaks of vomiting as if the food would come out through their nostrils. Alternate translation: “until you are sick and vomit” or (2) they would eat so much meat that it would be as if it would come out of their nostrils. Alternate translation: “until it feels like it would have to come out of your nostrils” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Why did we leave Egypt?

The people had used this question to express regret and to complain. Alternate translation: “We never should have left Egypt.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 11:21

600,000 people

Alternate translation: "six hundred thousand people" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 11:22

Should we kill flocks and herds to satisfy them? Should we catch all the fish in the sea to satisfy them?

Moses uses these questions to express his doubt that there could be enough meat to feed all of the people.

Alternate translation: "We would have to kill entire flocks and herds and catch all the fish in the sea to satisfy them!"

(See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

flocks and herds

These two words mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize a great number of animals. (See:

Doublet (p.1364)) (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**)

all the fish in the sea

The word "all" is an exaggeration to show how impossible it was to provide food for all the people of Israel. (See:

Hyperbole (p.1387)) (See: **Hyperbole (p.1387)**)

to satisfy them

Alternate translation: "to satisfy their hunger"

Numbers 11:23

Is the hand of Yahweh short

Here the word **hand** represents God's power. Alternate translation: "Do you think that I am not powerful enough to do this?" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Is the hand of Yahweh short

God uses this question to rebuke Moses for thinking that God did not have the power to provide enough meat for the people. Alternate translation: "You should know I am more than strong enough to do this." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 11:24

Yahweh's words

Alternate translation: "what Yahweh had said"

Numbers 11:25

some of the Spirit that was on Moses

The “Spirit” here represents the power that God’s Spirit had given to Moses. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 11:17](#). Alternate translation: “some of the power that the Spirit had given to Moses” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

put it on the seventy elders

Giving power to the elders is spoken of as putting the Spirit on them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 11:17](#). Alternate translation: “gave it to the seventy elders” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

When the Spirit rested on them

Having power from the Spirit is spoken of as if the Spirit rested on them. Alternate translation: “When they had power from the Spirit” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 11:26

The Spirit also rested on them

The Spirit giving them power is spoken of as if the Spirit rested on them. Alternate translation: "The Spirit also gave them power" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Their names were written on the list

This can be written in active form. Alternate translation: "Moses had written their names on the list" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 11:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:28

stop them

Alternate translation: "tell them to stop prophesying"

Numbers 11:29

Are you jealous for my sake?

Moses uses this question to rebuke Joshua. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement, if necessary. Alternate translation: "You should not be jealous for my sake." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Are you jealous for my sake?

What Joshua might have been jealous about can be stated clearly if needed. Alternate translation: "Are you concerned that they might be taking away something that belongs to me?" or "Are you concerned that people will not respect my authority?" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

that he would put his Spirit on them all

Moses speaks of God's Spirit giving people power as if God were to put his Spirit on them. Alternate translation: "that God's Spirit would give them all power" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 11:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 11:31

quail

a small bird (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1438)**) (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1438)**)

about a day's journey on one side and a day's journey on the other side

Alternate translation: "in each direction for as far as a person could walk in one day"

and like two cubits

A **cubit** is a unit of measurement equal to about 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: "and about 92 centimeters" or "and about 1 meter" (See: **Biblical Distance (p.1347)**) (See: **Biblical Distance (p.1347)**)

Numbers 11:32

No one gathered less than ten homers of quail

This is a double negative which can be expressed as a positive statement. Alternate translation: "Everyone gathered at least ten homers of quail" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**) (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**)

ten homers

A homer is a unit of volume equal to about 220 liters. Alternate translation: "2,200 liters" (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

Numbers 11:33

While the meat was still between their teeth, while they were chewing it

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Together they emphasize that God punished them immediately, even while they were eating the meat. Alternate translation: "While they were still eating the meat" (See:

Parallelism (p.1414)) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 11:34

and he called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah

This was the same **place** that was formerly called, "Taberah" in [11:3](#). Alternate translation: "They named that place Kibroth Hattaavah" (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 11:35

Hazeroth

This is the name of a place in the desert. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 12

Numbers 12 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the poetry in 12:6-8.

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Idiom

God used the idiom “mouth to mouth” meaning “speaking directly with both people present.” This indicated that Moses was more than just a prophet and greater than other prophets. (See: [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-idiom\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/prophet\]\]](#))

Numbers 12:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 12:2

Has Yahweh spoken only with Moses? Has he not spoken also with us?

Miriam and Aaron use these questions to complain that Moses had so much authority and they did not. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: “Yahweh has not spoken only with Moses. He has also spoken with us.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Now Yahweh heard

The word “Now” here draws attention to the important point that follows.

Numbers 12:3

Now the man Moses

Alternate translation: "Now" is used to mark a break in the main story line. The narrator tells background information about Moses' character. (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**) (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**)

Numbers 12:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 12:5

a pillar of cloud

The shape of the cloud is spoken of as if it were a pillar. Alternate translation: “a cloud shaped like a pillar” or “a tall cloud” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 12:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 12:7

My servant Moses is not like that

Alternate translation: "I do not speak to Moses like that"

He is faithful in all my house

Here "my house" represents the nation of Israel. Being faithful in God's house represents being faithful in leading Israel. Alternate translation: "Moses leads my people faithfully" or "Moses is the one whom I trust to lead my people Israel" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 12:8

So why are you unafraid to speak against my servant, against Moses?

Yahweh asks this question to rebuke Miriam and Aaron. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: “You should be afraid to speak against my servant, against Moses.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

against my servant, against Moses

The phrase “against Moses” clarifies that he is the “servant” of whom Yahweh speaks. Alternate translation: “against my servant, Moses” (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 12:9

Yahweh's anger burned against them

Yahweh's anger is spoken of as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry with them" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 12:10

was as white as snow

Leprosy turned Miriam's skin white. Alternate translation: "became very white" (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 12:11

do not hold this sin against us

To hold people's sin against them is to say that they are guilty for their sin. Here it represents punishing them for their sin. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 12:12

Please do not let her be like the dead one

Aaron compares the deadly leprosy of Miriam to a stillborn baby who has begun to decompose. (See: **Simile (p. 1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 12:13

Please heal her, God, please

Here “please” is repeated for emphasis.

Numbers 12:14

If her father surely spit in her face

This describes something that could have happened but did not. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**)

If her father surely spit in her face

Spitting in someone's face was a terrible insult. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 12:15

Miriam was shut outside the camp

Being sent out of the camp and not being allowed to go back in is spoken of as if there were a door that was closed behind her. Alternate translation: "Miriam was sent outside the camp" or "Miriam was kept outside the camp" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Miriam was shut outside the camp

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 shut Miriam outside the camp" or "Moses sent Miriam outside the camp" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 12:16

Hazeroth

This is the name of a place in the desert. See how you translated it in [Numbers 11:35](#).

Numbers 13

Numbers 13 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Spies

Leaders from each of the tribes went to spy on the Promised Land in Canaan. Yahweh was not concerned with how many people were there, because he could defeat them. It appears that he is testing the faith of the people. The people were supposed to be excited to enter this wonderful land, instead they were afraid. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/promisedland\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/test\]\]](#) and **faith (p.1446)**)

Numbers 13:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:2

which I have given

God had decided that the land of Canaan would belong to the people of Israel, but they had not yet moved into it.
Alternate translation: "which I have decided to give" or "which I will soon give" (See: **Predictive Past (p.1422)**) (See: **Predictive Past (p.1422)**)

Each man must be a leader among them

Alternate translation: "Each man whom you send must be a leader among his tribe"

Numbers 13:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:4

Shammua son of Zaccur

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:5

Shaphat & Hori

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:6

Jephunneh

A man's name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:7

Igal

A man's name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:8

Nun

A man's name. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:9

Palti & Raphu

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:10

Gaddiel & Sodi

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:11

Gaddi & Susi

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

from the tribe of Joseph (that is to say, from the tribe Manasseh)

The relationship between Joseph and Manasseh can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "from the tribe of Joseph's son Manasseh" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 13:12

Ammiel & Gemalli

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:13

Sethur & Michael

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:14

Nahbi & Vophsi

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:15

Geuel & Maki

These are men's names. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:16

Hoshea son of Nun

See how you translated these men's names in [Numbers 13:8](#).

Numbers 13:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:19

Is it good or bad? What cities are there? Are they like camps, or are they fortified cities?

Moses asks these questions to explain the kind of information that the men were to report back to him. These can be expressed as a statement. Alternate translation: "See if the land is good or bad, what kind of cities are there, and whether those cities are only camps, or whether they have defensive walls around them." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Are they like camps, or are they fortified cities

Fortified cities had strong walls around them to protect them from enemy armies. Camps did not have these walls.

Numbers 13:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:21

Zin & Rehob

These are names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

the wilderness of Zin

The word “Zin” here is the Hebrew name of the wilderness. (See: **Copy or Borrow Words (p.1357)**) (See: **Copy or Borrow Words (p.1357)**)

Numbers 13:22

Zoan

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

And Hebron had been built seven years before Zoan of Egypt

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 the Canaanites had built Hebron seven years before the Egyptians built Zoan" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Ahiman & Sheshai & Talmai

These are names of clans that were named after their ancestors. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Anak

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 13:23

Eshkol

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

between two of their group

Alternate translation: "between two men of their group"

Numbers 13:24

That place was named

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 named that place" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 13:25

After forty days

Alternate translation: "After 40 days" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 13:26

They brought back word

Here “word” refers to a report. Alternate translation: “They brought back their report” or “They reported what they had seen” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 13:27

and it is certainly flowing with milk and honey

They 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: "And it is certainly excellent for raising livestock and growing crops" or "And it is certainly a very fertile land" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

milk

Since milk comes from cows and goats, it represents livestock and the food produced from the livestock. Alternate translation: "food from livestock" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

honey

Since honey is produced from flowers, it represents crops and the food produced from the crops. Alternate translation: "food from crops" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 13:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 13:32

they spread around & They said

Here “they” refers to all of the men who examined the land except for Caleb and Joshua.

the land that they had examined

Here “they” refers to all of the men who examined the land including Caleb and Joshua.

a land that eats up its inhabitants

The men speak of the land, or the people of the land, being very dangerous as if the land ate up people. Alternate translation: “a very dangerous land” or “a land where the people will kill us” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 13:33

Anak

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

In our own sight & in their sight

Here sight represents evaluation and judgement. Alternate translation: “In our own opinion ... in their opinion” or “In our own judgement ... in their judgement” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

we were like grasshoppers in comparison with them

The men speak of grasshoppers to show how very small they thought themselves to be compared to the people of the land. Alternate translation: “we are as small as grasshoppers in comparison with them” (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 14

Numbers 14 General Notes

Important figures of speech in this chapter

Rhetorical Questions

The author uses several rhetorical questions in this chapter. These questions indicate that people did not have faith in Yahweh. Yahweh also uses rhetorical questions to show the people's lack of faith. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-rquestion\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/faith\]\]](#))

Numbers 14:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:3

Why did Yahweh bring us to this land to die by the sword?

The people use this question in order to complain and accuse Yahweh of treating them unfairly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "Yahweh should not have brought us to this land only to die by the sword." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

to die by the sword

Here "the sword" represents either being killed by the sword or being killed in battle. Alternate translation: "to die when people attack us with swords" or "to die in battle" or (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Is it not better for us to return to Egypt?

The people use this question to encourage people to agree with them that it would be better to return to Egypt. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "It would be better for us to return to Egypt than to try to conquer Canaan." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 14:4

They said to each another

This refers to the people of Israel.

Numbers 14:5

lay facedown

Moses and Aaron did this to show that they were humbling themselves before God. They feared that God might punish the people for rebelling against him. Alternate translation: "lay facedown in humility to God" or "lay facedown to pray to God" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 14:6

Nun & Jephunneh

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

who were some of those sent

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: “who were some of those whom Moses sent” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

tore their clothes

Tearing one's clothes was a gesture indicating the person is very troubled and is mourning. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 14:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:8

The land flows with milk and honey

They spoke of the land being good for animals and plants as if the milk and honey from those animals and plants flowed through it. See how you translated this in [Numbers 13:27](#). Alternate translation: “It is excellent for raising livestock and growing crops” or “It is very fertile land” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 14:9

for they are our food

Joshua and Caleb speak of destroying their enemies as easily as if they were eating bread. Alternate translation: “for we will destroy them as easily as we can eat food” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Their protection will be removed from them

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “Yahweh will remove their protection from them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Their protection

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **protection**, you can express the same idea with “protect.” Alternate translation: “Anyone that might protect them” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 14:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:11

How long must this people despise me? How long must they fail to trust me, despite all the signs & them?

Yahweh uses these questions to show that he was angry and had lost patience with the people. They can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "This people has despised me for too long. They have failed to trust me for too long, despite all the signs ... them." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1426)**)

Numbers 14:12

disinherit them

This may imply that he would destroy them, and some versions translate it that way. Alternate translation: “reject them from being my people”

make from your own clan

Here “your” is singular and refers to Moses. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 14:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:14

you are seen face to face

This could mean: (1) Moses speaks of God showing himself to his people as if God had allowed them to actually see his face. Alternate translation: “they have seen you” or (2) Moses speaks of the intimate relationship between him and God as if Moses could see God’s face when God spoke to him. Alternate translation: “you speak directly to me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 14:15

as one man

Killing them all at the same time is spoken of as killing them as one person. Alternate translation: "all at one time"
(See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 14:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:18

abundant in covenant faithfulness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **faithfulness**, you can express the same idea with “faithful” or “faithfully.” Alternate translation: “always faithful to his covenant” or “always faithfully loves his people” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

He will by no means clear the guilty

Clearing away people’s sin is a metaphor for refusing to punish them. God would not clear away the sin of guilty people. Alternate translation: “He will always punish the guilty” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

when he brings the punishment of the ancestors’ sin on their descendants

Punishing people is spoken of as if punishment were an object that could be brought and put on people. Alternate translation: “when he punishes the guilty people’s descendants for the guilty people’s sins” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 14:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:21

all the earth will be filled with my glory

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: “my glory will fill all the earth” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 14:22

they have still tempted me

Alternate translation: "they have continued to test me"

these ten times

Here the number 10 represents too many times. Alternate translation: "too many times" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

have not listened to my voice

Here "listened" represents obedience, and God's voice represents what he said. Alternate translation: "have not obeyed what I have said" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 14:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:24

because another spirit is with him

Here, **spirit** represents his attitude. Caleb was willing to obey God. What his attitude was can be stated clearly.

Alternate translation: "because he has a different attitude" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 14:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:27

How long must I tolerate this evil community that criticizes me?

Yahweh asks this question because he has lost patience with the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have tolerated this evil community who has criticized me long enough." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

I have heard the complaining of the people of Israel

The word "complaining," an abstract noun, can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "I have heard the people of Israel complain" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 14:28

as you have spoken in my hearing

Alternate translation: "as I have heard you say"

Numbers 14:29

Your dead bodies will fall

Their dead bodies falling represents them dying. Alternate translation: "You will die" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

you who were counted in the census

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "you whom Moses counted in the census" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

from twenty years old and upward

Alternate translation: "twenty years old and older"

Numbers 14:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:32

your dead bodies will fall

Their dead bodies falling represents them dying. Alternate translation: "you will die" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)
(See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 14:33

Your children will be shepherds in the wilderness

Some modern versions choose to translate, “Your children will wander in the wilderness.” This is because in ancient times, shepherds usually wandered from place to place so their flocks and herds could find pasture.

They must bear the consequences of your acts

Alternate translation: “They must suffer the consequences of your acts” or “They must suffer because of your acts”

until the end of your corpses

A corpse is a dead body. The end of their corpses represents the last of the them dying. Alternate translation: “until the last one of you dies” or “until all of you die” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 14:34

bear the consequences of your sins

Alternate translation: "suffer the consequences of your sins" or "suffer because of your sins"

Numbers 14:35

They will be completely cut off

This probably means that they will no longer exist. Alternate translation: “they will come to an end” or “they will all be destroyed” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 14:36

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:37

these men who had brought out a bad report about the land were struck down, and they died of a plague before Yahweh

The phrase “plague before Yahweh” shows that Yahweh struck them down. 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 struck down these men who had brought out a bad report about the land, and they died” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 14:38

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:39

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 14:40

Look, we are here

They use these words to emphasize that they have changed their minds and now want to do what they should have done the day before. Your language may have a different way of showing this.

Numbers 14:41

Why are you now violating Yahweh's command?

Moses asks this question to rebuke the people of Israel. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not be violating Yahweh's command again." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 14:42

Yahweh is not with you

Helping them is spoken of as being with them. Alternate translation: “Yahweh will not help you” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

to prevent you from being defeated by your enemies

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 prevent your enemies from defeating you” or “to give you victory over your enemies” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 14:43

you will die by the sword

Here “the sword” refers to battle. Alternate translation: “you will die in battle” or “they will kill you when you fight against them” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

you turned back from following Yahweh

Obedying Yahweh is spoken of as following him, and stopping doing that is spoken of as turning away from him. Alternate translation: “you stopped obeying Yahweh” or “you have decided not to obey Yahweh” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

he will not be with you

Helping them is spoken of as being with them. Alternate translation: “he will not help you” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 14:44

they presumed to go up into the hill country

Alternate translation: "they dared to go up into the hill country even though God did not approve"

into the hill country

Much of the land of Israel is elevated. When the Israelites crossed the Jordan River valley to attack the Canaanites, there were hills that they had to climb in order to go farther into the land of Canaan.

Numbers 14:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15

Numbers 15 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Purifying the people

As the people travel through the wilderness, Yahweh is purifying them. He is doing this so that they are able to enter into the Promised Land. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/purify\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/promisedland\]\]](#))

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Prostitution

The imagery of prostitution is commonly used in Scripture to indicate that Yahweh alone is to be worshiped. The people are compared to the prostitute because a husband is to only have a sexual relationship with his wife. Both the prostitute and the worship of other gods are violations of this exclusive relationship. Many cultures will struggle with this imagery because of a desire to use euphemisms. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/falsegod\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-euphemism\]\]](#))

Numbers 15:1

General Information:

General Information:

Numbers 15:1-32 tells what God told Moses to tell the people of Israel.

Numbers 15:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:3

to produce a pleasing aroma for Yahweh from the herd or the flock

The Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with the person who burns the offering. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by burning a sacrifice from the herd or the flock" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 15:4

a burnt offering

This refers to the offerings spoken of in [Numbers 15:3](#).

a tenth of an ephah

An ephah is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: “about 2 liters” or “two liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

one-fourth of a hin

A hin is a unit of volume equal to about 3.7 liters. Alternate translation: “about 1 liter” or “one liter” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

Numbers 15:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:6

two-tenths of an ephah

An ephah is a unit of volume equal to about 22 liters. Alternate translation: “4 liters” or “four and a half liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

a third of a hin

A hin is a unit of volume equal to about 3.7 liters. Alternate translation: “one liter” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

Numbers 15:7

It will produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

The Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with the person who burns the offering. Alternate translation: "You will please Yahweh by offering it" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 15:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:9

three-tenths of an ephah

You may convert this to a modern measure. Alternate translation: “six and one half liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

half a hin

You may convert this to a modern measure Alternate translation: “two liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

Numbers 15:10

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 you burn on the altar” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

The Lord being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offers the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: “to please Yahweh by offering it” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 15:11

It must be done

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "You must do it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:12

must be done as described

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “you must do as I have described” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:13

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 they burn on the altar" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

to produce an aroma that is pleasing to Yahweh

Yahweh being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offers the sacrifice is spoken of as if Yahweh were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by offering it" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 15:14

he must make an offering 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: "he must burn an offering on the altar" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

The Lord being pleased with the sincere worshiper who offers the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: "to please Yahweh by offering it" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 15:15

As you are, so also must be the traveler

This could mean: (1) "You and the traveler staying with you are alike before Yahweh" or (2) "The same law applies to both you and the traveler"

He must act as you act before Yahweh

Because it says that they must act as the Israelites in Yahweh's presence, it is implied that they must obey all of Yahweh's commands. Alternate translation: "he must act as you act and obey all of Yahweh's commands" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 15:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:19

the food produced 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: “the food that the land produces” or “the food that you produce in the land” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:20

the first of your dough

This could mean: (1) the first grain that they would gather during the harvest or (2) the dough that they would make from the first of their grain. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

a loaf

Calling it a loaf implies that they would cooked the dough first.

to raise it up as a raised offering

This idiom “raise it up” refers to offering it as a gift. Alternate translation: “to offer it as a gift” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

a raised offering from the threshing floor

The offering is spoken of as being from the threshing floor because this is where they would separate the grain from the other parts of the plant.

Numbers 15:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:22

General Information:

General Information:

The word “you” here refers to Israelite people.

Numbers 15:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:24

to produce a sweet aroma for Yahweh

The Lord being pleased with the sincere worshipers who offer the sacrifice is spoken of as if God were pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice. Alternate translation: “to please Yahweh by burning it” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

must be made a grain offering and drink offering

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “you must make a grain offering and drink offering” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

as commanded by the decree

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: “as the decree commands” or “as I commanded when I made the decree” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:25

They will be forgiven

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I will forgive them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

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 they made by fire" or "that they burned on the altar" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:26

all the community of the people of Israel will be forgiven

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I will forgive all the community of the people of Israel" (See:

Active or Passive (p.1337)) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:27

a female goat a year old

Alternate translation: "a 1-year-old female goat"

Numbers 15:28

That person will be forgiven when atonement has been made

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I will forgive that person when the priest has made atonement" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:30

and that person shall be cut off from the midst of his people

The metaphor **cut off** could mean: (1) he must be sent away from Israel. (2) he must not be considered a member of the people of Israel anymore. (3) he must be killed. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

and that person shall be cut off from the midst of his people

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 his people must send him away" or "And I will no longer consider him to be one of the people of Israel" or "And you must kill him" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:31

has broken his commandment

Not obeying a **commandment** of Yahweh is spoken of as breaking it. Alternate translation: “has disobeyed my commandment” or “has not obeyed what I commanded” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

His iniquity shall be on him

Here, **iniquity** could refer to: (1) the punishment for that sin or (2) the guilt of that sin. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

His iniquity shall be on him

Here, **iniquity** being **on him** is a metaphor that could mean: (1) he is being punished. Alternate translation: “I will punish him because of his sin” (2) he is guilty. Alternate translation: “I will consider him guilty” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 15:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:34

it had not been declared what should be done with 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: “Yahweh had not declared what they should do with him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:35

The man must surely 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: “You must surely put the man to death” or “The man must surely die” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 15:36

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:37

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 15:38

the descendants of Israel

Alternate translation: "the people of Israel"

Numbers 15:39

to carry them out

Alternate translation: "to obey them"

And you shall not explore after your heart and after your eyes

Here, **explore after** is a metaphor for thinking about something. Alternate translation: "so that you do not think about whatever your heart and eyes want" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

And you shall not explore after your heart and after your eyes

Here the **heart** represents what a person wants, and the **eyes** represent what a person sees and wants. Alternate translation: "And you must not think about whatever you want" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

them which you are prostituting after

Being unfaithful to God by choosing to do whatever they want is spoken of as if they were women who were unfaithful to their husband by choosing to have sinful relationships with other men. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

them which you are prostituting after

It can be stated clearly that this was a shameful thing to do. Alternate translation: "and be shamefully unfaithful to me" or "and do those things instead of obeying me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 15:40

call to mind

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “remember” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 15:41

I am Yahweh your God

This clause is repeated for emphasis.

Numbers 16

Numbers 16 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Rebellion and punishment

A certain Levite and a few men from the tribe of Reuben claimed that they were just as good as Moses and Aaron, and they also could do the work of sacrificing animals at the sacred tent. So Moses told them to come to the sacred tent and burn incense to Yahweh. God then made the earth open and swallow up these leaders and their families. He also sent fire to destroy 250 other men who had joined with those leaders. These actions showed that only the Levites, those whom Yahweh appointed, could be priests. Also, it taught the people that to rebel against Yahweh's anointed was to rebel against Yahweh. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/appoint\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/priest\]\]](#) and **anoint, anointed, anointing (p.1442)**)

Numbers 16:1

Kohath

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:17](#).

Numbers 16:2

rose up against Moses

Rebelling or criticizing someone in authority is spoken of as if they were standing up to fight. Alternate translation: “rebelled against Moses” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

two hundred and fifty

Alternate translation: “250” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

well-known members in the community

Alternate translation: “famous members of the community” or “important men in the community”

Numbers 16:3

You have gone too far

This represents doing more than one should. Alternate translation: “You have done more than you should” or “You assume to have more authority than you should” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Why do you lift up yourselves above the rest of Yahweh’s community?

The men ask this question to rebuke Moses and Aaron. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: “You are wrong to lift up yourselves above the rest of Yahweh’s community.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

lift up yourselves above the rest

Considering someone to be important is spoken of as lifting it up. Alternate translation: “consider yourselves more important than the rest” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 16:4

he lay facedown

This indicates that Moses was humbling himself before God. He was afraid that God would punish the people for rebelling against God and his chosen leaders. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 16:5

who is set apart 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: “whom Yahweh has set apart for himself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 16:6

censers

containers in which to burn incense

Numbers 16:7

before Yahweh

This is an idiom. Alternate translation: “in Yahweh’s presence” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

that man will be set apart to 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 will set apart that man for himself” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

You have gone too far

This represents doing more than one should. Alternate translation: “You have done more than you should” or “You assume to have more authority than you should” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 16:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:9

is it a small thing for you & to serve them?

Moses uses this question to rebuke Korah and the men with him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "You behave as though it is a small thing for you ... to serve them!" or "You should not consider it a small thing ... to serve them!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

a small thing for you

Alternate translation: "not enough for you" or "unimportant to you"

Numbers 16:10

you are seeking the priesthood also

Wanting to have the priesthood is spoken of as if they were looking for it. Alternate translation: “you want to have the priesthood too” or “you want to be priests also” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 16:11

Who is Aaron that you grumble against him?

Moses uses this question to show them that when they complain about what Aaron does, they are really complaining against Yahweh, because Aaron was doing what Yahweh told him to do. Alternate translation: "You are not really complaining about Aaron, but about Yahweh, whom Aaron obeys!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 16:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:13

Is it a small thing that you have brought us & to kill us in the wilderness?

Dathan and Abiram use this question to rebuke Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: “You behave as though it was a small thing for you to bring us ... and kill us in the wilderness.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

a small thing

Alternate translation: “not enough” or “unimportant”

from a land flowing with milk and honey

They 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. See how you translated this in [Numbers 14:8](#). Alternate translation: “from a land that is excellent for raising livestock and growing crops” or “from a very fertile land” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

to kill us

The people exaggerate because they will hold Moses responsible if any of them die. Alternate translation: “to have us die” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1387)**) (See: **Hyperbole (p.1387)**)

Numbers 16:14

as an inheritance

They spoke of what God would give them to be theirs forever as if it were an inheritance. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Now do you want to blind us with empty promises?

The people used this question to accuse Moses. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "Now you want to blind us with empty promises." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

to blind us

Deceiving people is spoken of as making them blind. Alternate translation: "to deceive us" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

with empty promises

They speak of promises that are not kept as if they are empty containers. Alternate translation: "with promises that you do not keep" or "by promising to do things that you do not do" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 16:15

I have not taken one donkey from them

One donkey here represents anything that a person may take from someone else. Alternate translation: "I have not taken anything from them, not even one donkey" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 16:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:17

censer

a container in which to burn incense

Numbers 16:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:21

that I may consume them

Destroying them is spoken of as if God were to eat them. Alternate translation: “that I may destroy them” or “and I will destroy them” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 16:22

lay facedown

This shows that Moses and Aaron were humbling themselves before God. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

the God of the spirits of all humanity

Here “spirits” represents the ability to live. Alternate translation: “the God who gives life to all humanity” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

if one man sins, must you be angry with all the community?

Moses and Aaron use this question to plead with God for the people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: “please do not be angry with all the community because one man sins” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 16:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:26

you will be consumed

Being destroyed is spoken of as if they would be eaten. Alternate translation: “you will be destroyed” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

you will be consumed by all their sins

Being destroyed because of their sins is spoken of as if the sins would destroy them. Alternate translation: “you will be destroyed because of all their sins” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

you will be consumed by all their sins

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: “all their sins will destroy you” or “Yahweh will destroy you because of all their sins” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 16:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:28

By this you will know

Here “this” refers to what Moses will say next.

Numbers 16:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:30

the earth opens its mouth and swallows them

Moses speaks as if the earth were alive and the opening in the ground into which these people would fall were a large mouth that would eat them. Alternate translation: “and they fall into it and are buried underneath the ground” (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 16:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:32

The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them

Moses speaks of the earth as if it were alive, and the hole that the people fell into as if it were the earth's mouth.
Alternate translation: "The earth opened up like a large mouth, and they fell into it and were buried in it" or "There was a giant hole in the ground, and they fell into it and were buried in it" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 16:33

went down alive into Sheol

A similar phrase occurs in [Numbers 16:30](#). See how you translated it there.

Numbers 16:34

They exclaimed

"They" refers to "All Israel."

The earth may swallow us up also

The people speak of the earth as if it were alive. Alternate translation: "The earth might open up and we too will fall into it" or "If the earth opens up again, we too will fall into it and be buried" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 16:35

fire flashed out from Yahweh and devoured the 250 men

Being destroyed by fire is spoken of as if they were eaten by the fire. Alternate translation: “fire flashed out from Yahweh and destroyed the 250 men” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

250 men

Alternate translation: “two hundred and fifty men” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 16:36

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:37

out of the flames

This refers to the flames that burned the 250 men.

Numbers 16:38

those who lost their lives

Losing their lives represents dying. Alternate translation: “those who died” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Let them be made

Here “them” refers to the censers. 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: “Let Eleazar make them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

they are set apart & They will be a sign

Here “they” and “They” refer to the censers.

Numbers 16:39

that had been used by the men who were burned up

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “that the men whom the fire had burned up had used” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 16:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:41

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:42

Then it happened

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

had assembled against Moses and Aaron

Alternate translation: “had assembled to complain against Moses and Aaron”

behold, the cloud

Here “behold” shows that the people were surprised by what they saw. Alternate translation: “suddenly, the cloud”

Numbers 16:43

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:44

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 16:45

so that I may consume them

God speaks of destroying them as if he would eat them. Alternate translation: “so that I may destroy them” or “and I will destroy them” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

lay down with their faces to the ground

This indicates that Moses and Aaron are humbling themselves before God. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 16:46

anger is coming from Yahweh

Anger coming from God represents God showing his anger. Alternate translation: "Yahweh is showing us his anger" or "Yahweh is very angry and is acting according to his anger" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 16:47

he put in the incense

Putting the incense in the censer here represents burning it. Alternate translation: “he burned the incense” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 16:48

the plague was stopped

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 plague stopped spreading” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 16:49

14,700 in number

Alternate translation: "fourteen thousand seven hundred in number" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 16:50

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 17

Numbers 17 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Which tribe should be special workers for God?

God told Moses that each tribe should bring one wooden staff and leave it overnight at the temple. The next day Aaron's staff representing the tribe of Levi bloomed and produced ripe almond nuts. This showed that the tribe of Levi was still the tribe chosen to be Yahweh's priests. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/elect\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/priest\]\]](#))

Numbers 17:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 17:2

twelve

Alternate translation: "12" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 17:3

Levi's staff

The name Levi here refers to the tribe of Levi.

for each leader from his ancestors' tribe

Here "his" refers to "each leader."

Numbers 17:4

the covenant decrees

The phrase “the covenant decrees” refers to the box that held the tablets that the covenant decrees were written on. Alternate translation: “the ark of the covenant” or “the box that holds the covenant decrees” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 17:5

the staff of the man whom I choose will bud

Alternate translation: "buds will start to grow on the staff of the man whom I choose"

cause the complaints from the people of Israel to stop, which they are speaking against you

Here "complaints" is an abstract noun that can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: "make the people of Israel stop complaining against you" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 17:6

selected from each of the ancestral tribes

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: “whom Moses selected from each of the ancestor’s tribes” (See:

Active or Passive (p.1337)) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 17:7

the tent of the covenant decrees

The phrase “the covenant decrees” refers to the box that held the tablets that the covenant decrees were written on. Alternate translation: “the tent of the covenant box” or “the tent that the covenant decrees are in” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 17:8

behold

The word “behold” here shows that something especially important has happened. You might have a similar word in your language.

Numbers 17:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 17:10

the covenant decrees

The phrase “the covenant decrees” refers to the box that held the tablets that the covenant decrees were written on. Alternate translation: “the ark of the covenant” or “the box that holds the covenant decrees” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

so that you may end complaints against me

The word “complaints” is an abstract noun that can be expressed as a verb. Alternate translation: “so that you may stop them from complaining against me” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

or they will die

This is what would happen if the people were to continue complaining. God wanted to prevent this. Alternate translation: “so that they will not die”

Numbers 17:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 17:12

We will die here. We will all perish!

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)
(See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 17:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 18

Numbers 18 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Tithes and offerings

The tribes of Israel were required to bring a tithe to the Levites in order to free them to serve Yahweh as priests. There is a detailed description of what belonged to Yahweh in this chapter. (See: **priest, priesthood (p.1460)**)

Numbers 18:1

all sins committed against the sanctuary

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: “all sins that anyone commits against the sanctuary” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

all sins committed by anyone in the priesthood

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: “all sins that anyone in the priesthood commits” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

anyone in the priesthood

Alternate translation: “any priest”

Numbers 18:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 18:3

They must serve you

Alternate translation: "They" refers to members of the tribe of Levi; the word "you" is singular and refers to Aaron. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

or they and also you will die

Here "they" refers to any member of the tribe of Levi who comes "near to anything in the sanctuary;" the word "you" is plural and refers to both Aaron and the rest of the Levites who are serving in approved roles. (See: **Pronouns (p.1424)**) (See: **Pronouns (p.1424)**)

Numbers 18:4

They must join you

Alternate translation: "They" refers to members of the tribe of Levi; the word "you" is singular and refers to Aaron. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

not come near you

Here "you" is plural and refers to both Aaron and the rest of the Levites. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 18:5

You must take responsibility

Here “you” is plural and refers to both Aaron and the rest of the Levites. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

so that my anger does not come on the people of Israel again

This could mean: (1) this represents God being extremely angry with his people. Alternate translation: “so that I do not become very angry with the people of Israel again” or (2) this represents God punishing them because of his anger. Alternate translation: “so that I do not punish the people of Israel again” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 18:6

They are a gift to you

Yahweh appointing the Levites to help Aaron is spoken of as if they were a gift that Yahweh were giving to Aaron. Alternate translation: "They are like a gift to you" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

ones given to Yahweh

Here, **given to Yahweh** represents being set apart to serve God. Alternate translation: "who have been set apart to serve me" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

ones given to 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: "which I have set apart for myself" or "and I have set them apart for myself" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 18:7

only you and your sons

Here “you” and “your” are singular and refer to Aaron. Other occurrences of “you” and “your” are plural and refer to Aaron and his sons. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

exercise the priesthood

Alternate translation: “do the work of priests”

everything inside the curtain

Being inside the curtain represents being inside the room behind the curtain. Alternate translation: “everything in the room behind the curtain” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Any foreigner who approaches must 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: “Any foreigner who approaches must die” or “You must put to death any foreigner who approaches” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

who approaches

What they should not approach can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: “who approaches the sacred things” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 18:8

I have given these offerings to you

God speaks as if he had already done this because it is a decision that he had already made. Alternate translation: "I give these offerings to you"

as your ongoing share

A share is a portion of something that someone receives. Alternate translation: "as the portion that you will continually receive"

Numbers 18:9

kept from the 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 you do not completely burn on the altar” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 18:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 18:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 18:12

the firstfruits

This refers to the first of the best oil, wine, and grain that they harvest.

Numbers 18:13

Everyone who is clean in your family

Being acceptable to God is spoken of as if they were clean. Alternate translation: "Everyone in your family who is acceptable to me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 18:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 18:15

Everything that opens the womb, all the firstborn

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. Alternate translation: "Every firstborn male" (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Everything that opens the womb

The idiom "opens the womb" means to be the first male that a mother gives birth to. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

the people must certainly buy back every firstborn son

Instead of sacrificing their firstborn sons, people had to pay the priests for their sons.

Numbers 18:16

Those that are to be bought back by the people must be bought back after becoming one month old

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 people must buy them back when they become one month old" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Those that are to be bought back

Most likely this refers only to firstborn humans that must be bought back and not to firstborn unclean animals.

five shekels & which equals twenty gerahs

If it is necessary to use modern weight units, here are two ways of doing it. Alternate translation: "five pieces of silver ... each of which equals ten grams" or "fifty grams of silver, using the standard weights that are used in the sanctuary" (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

five shekels

A shekel is a unit of weight. What was weighed can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "five shekels of silver" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

sanctuary shekel

There were shekels of different weights. This is the one that people had to use in the sanctuary of the sacred tent. It weighed twenty gerahs, which was about 11 grams. (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**) (See: **Biblical Weight (p.1355)**)

Numbers 18:17

You must sprinkle their blood

That he must kill the animals first can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: "You must kill them and sprinkle their blood" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

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 you make by fire" or "that you burn with fire on the altar" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

an aroma pleasing to Yahweh

The Lord's pleasure with the aroma represents his pleasure with the person who burns the offering. Alternate translation: "and Yahweh will be pleased with you" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 18:18

the raised breast and the right thigh

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 breast and the right thigh that you lift up as a gift to me” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 18:19

I have given to you

God speaks as if he had already done this because it is a decision that he had already made. Alternate translation: "I give to you"

as a continual share

A share is a portion of something that someone receives. Alternate translation: "as the portion that you will continually receive"

an everlasting covenant of salt & a binding covenant forever

The two phrases refer to the same thing. Together they emphasize that the covenant will endure forever. Alternate translation: "an agreement forever" (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

an everlasting covenant of salt

Salt represented permanence and was used in offerings and covenant meals. Alternate translation: "a permanent covenant" or "an everlasting covenant" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 18:20

You will have no inheritance in the people's land

God speaks of the land that the other people will possess as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: "You will not possess any of the people's land" or "You will not receive any of the land that the Israelites will possess" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

I am your share and inheritance

God speaks of the great honor that Aaron and his descendants will have by serving him as priests as if God were something that they will inherit. Alternate translation: "Instead, I am what you will have" or "Instead, I will allow you to serve me and I will provide for you through that service" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 18:21

look, I have given

The word “look” here adds emphasis to what follows. Alternate translation: “indeed, I have given”

as their inheritance

God speaks of what Aaron and his descendants will receive as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: “as their portion of what I give to all Israel” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 18:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 18:23

Among the people of Israel they must have no inheritance

God speaks of the land that the other people of Israel will possess as if they will inherit it. The Levites would not receive any of the land. Alternate translation: "they must not have any of the land that the other people of Israel receive" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 18:24

as their inheritance

God speaks of what Aaron and his descendants will receive as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: “as their portion of what I give to all Israel” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 18:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 18:26

When you receive from the people of Israel the tenth that I have given to you from them

The people of Israel would offer Yahweh a tenth of their crops and animals, and Yahweh would give that to the Levites.

for your inheritance

God speaks of what Aaron and his descendants will receive as if they will inherit it. Alternate translation: “as your portion of what I give to all Israel” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 18:27

Your contribution must be considered by you

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "You must consider your contribution" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 18:28

you must give his contribution to Aaron the priest

Here "his" refers to Yahweh. It was Yahweh's contribution in the sense that they had to give it to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "you must give Aaron the priest the contribution that you owe Yahweh"

Numbers 18:29

that have been given to you

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 people of Israel give to you” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 18:30

the best of it

Alternate translation: "the best of what you have received from the people of Israel"

Numbers 18:31

the rest of your gifts

The “gifts” are the offerings that the Israelites give to God and that the Levites receive from them.

Numbers 18:32

You will not incur any guilt by eating and drinking it

Alternate translation: "You will not be guilty when you eat and drink it"

Numbers 19

Numbers 19 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Ritually clean

This chapter talks about being clean. Some of these rituals were required to make a priest clean in order to set them apart to serve Yahweh. Other rituals were required because they prevented people from getting sick. (See: **clean, wash (p.1444)**)

Numbers 19:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 19:2

a statute, a law

These two words share similar meanings. Alternate translation: “a statute of the law” or “a legal statute” (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**) (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**)

bring to you

Here “you” is singular and refers to Moses.

flaw or blemish

These two words mean basically the same thing and emphasize that this animal is to have no imperfections. (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**) (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**)

Numbers 19:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 19:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 19:5

in his sight

Alternate translation: "in his view" or "so he could see it"

Numbers 19:6

priest must take cedarwood

Alternate translation: "The priest" refers to Eleazar.

scarlet wool

Alternate translation: "red wool"

Numbers 19:7

Then he must wash his clothes

Here “he” refers to Eleazar the priest.

he will remain unclean

Being unacceptable to God or unfit to do any sacred work is spoken of as not being clean. (See: **Metaphor (p. 1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 19:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 19:9

Someone who is clean

Being acceptable to God and fit to do sacred work is spoken of as being clean. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

These ashes must be kept

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "You must keep these ashes" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

in a clean place

Being acceptable to God is spoken of as being clean. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 19:10

He will remain unclean

Being unacceptable to God or unfit to do any sacred work is spoken of as not being clean. (See: **Metaphor (p. 1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 19:11

General Information:

General Information:

The ideas of “clean” and “purify” represent being acceptable to God. The ideas of “unclean,” “defile,” “impurity,” and “uncleanness” represent not being acceptable to God. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

the dead body of any man

Alternate translation: “the dead body of any person”

Numbers 19:12

purify himself

The person would ask someone who is clean to purify him by sprinkling on him some water mixed with the cows ashes. Asking someone to purify him is spoken of as if he were to purify himself. Alternate translation: “ask someone to purify him” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

if he does not purify himself the third day, then he will not be clean on the seventh day

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: “he will be clean on the seventh day only if he purifies himself the third day” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**) (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**)

Numbers 19:13

and that person shall be cut off from Israel

Here the phrase **be cut off** means to be disowned and sent away. See how you translated this in [Numbers 9:13](#). Alternate translation: “And that person must be sent away” or “And you must send that person away” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

the water for impurity was not sprinkled on 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: “no one sprinkled the water for impurity on him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

the water for impurity

Alternate translation: “the water that is sprinkled on impure things to make them pure” or “the water for making things pure”

He will remain unclean; his uncleanness will remain on him

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and are combined for emphasis. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 19:14

General Information:

General Information:

The idea of “unclean” represents not being acceptable to God or fit for use. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 19:15

Every open container with no cover becomes unclean

This can be stated in a positive form. Alternate translation: "Open containers will remain clean only if they have covers" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**) (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**)

Numbers 19:16

someone who has been killed with a sword

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: “someone whom someone else has killed with a sword” (See:

Active or Passive (p.1337)) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 19:17

General Information:

General Information:

The idea of “unclean” represents not being acceptable to God or fit for use. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

General Information:

General Information:

The ideas of “clean” and “purify” here represent being acceptable to God. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 19:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 19:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 19:20

General Information:

General Information:

The ideas of “clean” and “purify” represent being acceptable to God and making something acceptable to God. The ideas of “unclean,” “defile,” and “impurity,” represent not being acceptable to God, making something unacceptable to God, and the state of being unacceptable to God. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

that person shall be cut off

Here the phrase **be cut off** means to be disowned and sent away. See how you translated this in [Numbers 9:13](#). Alternate translation: “that person must be sent away” or “you must send that person away” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

The water for impurity has not been sprinkled on 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: “No one has sprinkled the water for impurity on him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 19:21

the water for impurity

See how you translated this in [Numbers 19:13](#). Alternate translation: “the water that is sprinkled on impure things to make them pure” or “the water for making things pure”

Numbers 19:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20

Numbers 20 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Moses' sin

God told Moses to command water to come out of a rock for the people who were complaining that they had no water. Moses became angry with the people and hit the rock twice. God told him that he and Aaron would not be allowed to go into Canaan because he disobeyed by hitting the rock instead of just speaking to it. (See: **sin, sinful, sinner, sinning (p.1464)**)

Important figures of speech in this chapter

“It would have been better if we had died when our fellow Israelites died in front of Yahweh”

It is possible that this statement should be taken as hyperbole, but it does not have to be taken this way. The translator should probably avoid treating this as hyperbole. (See: **Hyperbole (p.1387)**)

Other possible translation difficulties in this chapter

Wilderness of Sin

Sin is the name of a place in this chapter. It is not a place that is known for its sin. The name is not related to the meaning of the word “sin.” (See: **sin, sinful, sinner, sinning (p.1464)**)

Numbers 20:1

the wilderness of Zin

The word “Zin” here is the Hebrew name of the wilderness. (See: **Copy or Borrow Words (p.1357)**) (See: **Copy or Borrow Words (p.1357)**)

the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. It marks when God rescued the Israelites from the Egyptians. The first month is during the last part of March and the first part of April on the Western calendar. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

was buried

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 buried her” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 20:2

they assembled

Here “they” refers to the community.

assembled together

Alternate translation: “came as a mob”

Numbers 20:3

in front of Yahweh

This represents being in front of Yahweh's tent. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 20:4

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

The people of Israel continue to complain to Moses and Aaron.

Why have you brought Yahweh's community into this wilderness to die here, we and our animals?

The people use this question in order to complain against Moses and Aaron. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have brought Yahweh's community into this wilderness to die here, we and our animals." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 20:5

Why did you make us come up out of Egypt to bring us to this horrible place?

The people use this question in order to complain against Moses and Aaron. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have made us leave Egypt to bring us to this horrible place." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1426)**)

Numbers 20:6

lay facedown

This indicates that Moses and Aaron are humbling themselves before God. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 20:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20:8

before their eyes

Here the people are represented by their “eyes” to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: “while they watch you” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 20:9

from before Yahweh

This represents Yahweh's tent. Alternate translation: "from Yahweh's tent" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 20:10

Must we bring water out of this rock for you?

Moses asks this question out of frustration to rebuke the people for complaining. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: “You complain that there is no water. Well, we will make water come out of this rock.” or “You would not be happy even if we caused water to come out of this rock. But I will do it anyway.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Must we bring

Here “we” refers to Moses and Aaron and may include Yahweh, but does not include the people. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.1371)**) (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.1371)**)

Numbers 20:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20:12

Because you did not trust me or honor me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel

How Moses showed that he did not trust and honor God can be stated clearly. Alternate translation: “Because you did not trust me or honor me as holy in the eyes of the people of Israel, but struck the rock instead of speaking to it as I told you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

in the eyes of the people of Israel

Here the people are represented by their “eyes” to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: “while the people of Israel were watching you” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 20:13

This place was called

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "People called this place" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 20:14

Your brother Israel

Moses uses this phrase to emphasize that the Israelites and the Edomites are related because their ancestors, Jacob and Esau, were brothers.

Numbers 20:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20:16

When we called out to Yahweh

Alternate translation: "When we prayed to Yahweh begging him to help us"

he heard our voice

Here "voice" represents their crying or what they said to him. Alternate translation: "he heard our cry" or "he heard what we asked for" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Look

The word "look" here shows that they have stopped speaking about the past and are now speaking about their present situation.

Numbers 20:17

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

The messengers continue speaking to the king of Edom.

We will not turn aside to the right hand or to the left

Here “turn aside” represents leaving the road. Alternate translation: “We will not leave the road in any direction”
(See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

the king’s highway

This is the main road that connects Damascus in the north to the Gulf of Aqabah in the south.

Numbers 20:18

You may not pass through me, lest I go out to meet you with the sword

Here, **You** and **you** are singular and refer to Moses. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

You may not pass through me, lest I go out to meet you with the sword

Here Moses represents the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "Your people may not pass through me, or i will go out to meet them with the sword" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

I will come with the sword

Here the sword represents the king's army. Alternate translation: "I will send my army" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 20:19

the people of Israel

This phrase refers to the Israelite messengers.

walk through on foot

This idiom means that they would simply travel through the area by walking. They would not come in chariots to attack the people of Edom. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 20:20

the king of Edom came against Israel with a strong hand with many soldiers

Here the hand represents the king's powerful army. Alternate translation: "the king of Edom sent a strong army of many soldiers to attack Israel" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 20:21

cross over their border

Here “their” refers to the Edomites.

Numbers 20:22

The people of Israel, the whole community

The phrase “the whole community” emphasizes that every person who was a part of “the people of Israel” was present, without exception. (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**) (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**)

Numbers 20:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20:24

Aaron must be gathered to his people

This is a gentle way to say that Aaron must die. It means that it is time for Aaron to die and for his spirit to go to the place where his ancestors are. Alternate translation: "Aaron must die" (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

rebelled against my word

Alternate translation: "refused to do what I said"

Numbers 20:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20:26

shall be gathered and die there

These two phrases mean basically the same thing. They mean that it is time for Aaron to die and for his spirit to go to the place where his ancestors are. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

shall be gathered

The phrase **shall be gathered** means that it is time for Aaron's spirit to go to the place where his ancestors are. This is a polite way of speaking about his death. (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

Numbers 20:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 20:29

thirty days

Alternate translation: "30 days" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 21

Numbers 21 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the poetry in 21:14-15, 17-18, 27-30.

Special concepts in this chapter

Ungrateful

The Israelites said, "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread, no water, and we hate this miserable food." After all Yahweh had done, they were very ungrateful. This showed their lack of faith and trust in Yahweh. (See: [\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/faith\]](#) and [\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/trust\]](#))

Numbers 21:1

he fought against Israel

Here “he fought” means that his army fought. Alternate translation: “his army fought against Israel” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 21:2

Israel vowed

This refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: “The people of Israel vowed” or “The Israelites made a vow”
(See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 21:3

listened to Israel's voice

Here "listen" means that Yahweh did as they asked. Alternate translation: "did what Israel asked" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Israel's voice

Here "voice" is a metonym that refers to their request. Alternate translation: "what Israel asked" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

They completely destroyed them and their cities

Alternate translation: "The people of Israel completely destroyed the Canaanite army and their cities"

That place was called Hormah

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 called that place Hormah" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 21:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 21:5

Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness?

The people used this question in order to rebuke Moses. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not made us leave Egypt to die in the wilderness!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 21:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 21:7

we have spoken against Yahweh and you

Alternate translation: "we have said bad things about Yahweh and you"

we have spoken & from us

The words "we" and "us" here refer to the people but not to Moses. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.1371)**)
(See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.1371)**)

Numbers 21:8

Make a snake

Since it is impossible for Moses to make a real snake, it is implied that he was to make a model of a snake. This implied information can be made clear. Alternate translation: “Make a model of a snake” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

everyone who is bitten

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: “everyone whom a snake bites” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 21:9

a bronze snake

Alternate translation: "a snake out of bronze"

if he looked at the bronze snake, he survived

Here "he" refers to "any person" who was bitten by a snake.

Numbers 21:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 21:11

that faces Moab

Here “faces” is an idiom that means “is across from” or “is next to.” Alternate translation: “that is next to Moab” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 21:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 21:13

forms the border of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites

This means that the two peoples lived on different sides of the river, which was a boundary between them. The Moabite people lived south of the river and the Amorites lived on the north.

Numbers 21:14

Waheb in Suphah

These are both names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 21:15

the slope of the valleys that lead toward the town of Ar and lie along the border of Moab

Alternate translation: "the valleys that go downhill to the town of Ar and lie along the border of Moab"

Numbers 21:16

to Beer, the well

This can be stated as two sentences. Alternate translation: “to Beer. There was a well there”

where Yahweh said to Moses, “Gather the people together for me to give them water.”

This can be stated as an indirect quote. Alternate translation: “where Yahweh told Moses to gather the people together for him to give them water” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1359)**) (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1359)**)

Numbers 21:17

Rise up, well

Here, **well** represents the water in the well. Alternate translation: “Water, fill up the well” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Rise up, well

The Israelites are speaking to the water in the well as if it were a person who could hear them, and they are asking for it to fill the well. (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

Numbers 21:18

the well that our leaders dug, the well the nobles of the people dug

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the role of the leaders in digging the well. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

with the scepter and their staffs

A scepter was carried by those with authority, and the staff was carried by everyone. Neither of these are digging tools. These two items emphasize that they were not too proud to use any means available. Alternate translation: "using even their scepter and staffs" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 21:19

Nahaliel & Bamoth

These are the names of places. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 21:20

Mount Pisgah

This is the name of a mountain. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

and is looking down on the face of the wasteland

Here, **looking down** is an idiom. It is a way of saying that the mountain is high. Alternate translation: “and rises above the wilderness” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

and is looking down on the face of the wasteland

This speaks of the mountain as if it were a person who looks down to see the wilderness below him. (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

Numbers 21:21

Then Israel

Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel, and especially to their leaders. Alternate translation: "Then the Israelites" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 21:22

We will not turn into any field or vineyard

Alternate translation: "We will not go into any of your fields or vineyards"

the king's highway

This is the main road that connects Damascus in the north to the Gulf of Aqabah in the south. See how you translated this in [Numbers 20:17](#).

Numbers 21:23

to pass through their border

Here “their” refers to the Amorites. Alternate translation: “to cross over their border”

Jahaz

This is the name of a place. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

he fought against Israel

Here “he” refers to King Sihon who represents himself and his army. Alternate translation: “they fought against the Israelites” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 21:24

Israel attacked

Here "Israel" refers to the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "The Israelites attacked" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

with the edge of the sword

The "edge of the sword" is associated with death and complete destruction. Alternate translation: "and completely defeated them" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

took their land

Here the word "their" refers to the Amorites. Alternate translation: "conquered the land of the Amorites"

was fortified

The Israelites did not attack the Ammonites. Alternate translation: "was strongly defended"

Numbers 21:25

Heshbon and all of its villages

Here "its" is possessive to show that a relationship existed between the city of Heshbon and these nearby villages.
Alternate translation: "Heshbon and the nearby villages that it controlled"

Numbers 21:26

Sihon had taken all his land

Here “his” refers to the king of Moab.

Numbers 21:27

Heshbon & city of Sihon

These are two names that refer to the same city. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Let the city of Sihon be rebuilt and established again

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: "Let someone rebuild and establish again the city of Sihon" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

rebuilt and established

These two terms are very similar and emphasize that the city will be fully rebuilt. Alternate translation: "completely rebuilt" (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**) (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**)

Numbers 21:28

For fire went out from Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize that destruction will begin at Heshbon. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

For fire went out from Heshbon, a flame from the city of Sihon

Here the destroying army is spoken of as if it were a fire. Alternate translation: "King Sihon led a strong army from the city of Heshbon" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

devoured Ar of Moab

The army of Sihon is spoken of as if it was an animal that ate up the city of Ar. Alternate translation: "destroyed the town of Ar in the land of Moab" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 21:29

Moab & people of Chemosh

These two phrases refer to the same people. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

people of Chemosh

Alternate translation: "Chemosh" was the name of the false god whom the Moabites worshiped. Alternate translation: "the people who worship Chemosh"

He has made his sons

Alternate translation: "He" and "his" refer to Chemosh.

Numbers 21:30

we have conquered

Here “we” refers to the Israelites who defeated Sihon.

Heshbon is devastated

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 have devastated Heshbon” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Heshbon has perished as far as Dibon. & as far as Nophah, which is as far as Medeba

Heshbon, Dibon, Nophah, and **Medeba** are all places in Sihon’s kingdom. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Heshbon has perished as far as Dibon. & as far as Nophah, which is as far as Medeba

These places connected by **as far as** means the Israelites destroyed these places and everywhere in between—Sihon’s entire nation. (See: **Merism (p.1398)**) (See: **Merism (p.1398)**)

Numbers 21:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 21:32

drove out

Alternate translation: "chased away"

Numbers 21:33

went out against them

Alternate translation: "attacked them"

Numbers 21:34

Do to him as you did to Sihon king of the Amorites

The Israelites had completely destroyed Sihon. Alternate translation: "Destroy him like you destroyed Sihon king of the Amorites"

Numbers 21:35

So they killed him

Alternate translation: "So the army of Israel killed Og"

none of his people were left alive

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: "all of his people were dead" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

they took over his land

Alternate translation: "they took control of his land"

Numbers 22

Numbers 22 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The chapter begins a section on Balaam. The king of Moab wanted the prophet Balaam to come and curse Israel. God told him not to go but he wanted to go; so God told him to say only what God wanted him to say. Yahweh was able to use Balaam, even though he was not a prophet of Yahweh. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/prophet\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/curse\]\]](#))

Numbers 22:1

on the other side of the Jordan River from the city

The Israelites were camped on the east side of the Jordan River. Jericho was on the west side of the river.

Numbers 22:2

Balak son of Zippor

Balak was king of Moab. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Zippor

Zippor is the father of Balak. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 22:3

Moab was very afraid of the people & Moab was in terror of the people of Israel

These two phrases mean the same thing, and emphasize how afraid Moab was. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Moab was very afraid

Here "Moab" refers to the people of Moab. Alternate translation: "All of the Moabites were very afraid" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

because they were many

Alternate translation: "because there were many of them"

Numbers 22:4

The king of Moab said to the elders of Midian

The Moabites and the Midianites were two different groups of people, but the Midianites were living in the land of Moab at that time.

This multitude will eat up all that is around us as an ox eats up the grass in a field

The way the Israelites will destroy their enemies is spoken of as if they were an ox eating up the grass in a field. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Now Balak son of Zippor was king of Moab at that time

This changes from the main story to background information about Balak. (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**) (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**)

Numbers 22:5

He sent messengers

Alternate translation: "Balak sent messengers"

Beor

This is the name of Balaam's father. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Pethor

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

of his nation and his people

Alternate translation: "of Balaam's nation and people"

He called him

Balak did not speak to Balaam directly, but did so through the messengers he sent. Alternate translation: "Balak called Balaam"

They cover the face of the earth

This is an exaggeration to emphasize how many of them there were. Alternate translation: "They are extremely numerous" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1387)**) (See: **Hyperbole (p.1387)**)

the face of the earth

This refers to the surface of the earth. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 22:6

drive them

Alternate translation: "chase them"

I know that whomever you bless will be blessed, and whomever you curse will be cursed

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 know you have the power to bless or to curse people" (See:

Active or Passive (p.1337)) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 22:7

payment for divination

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **divination**, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: “money to pay Balaam to curse Israel” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p. 1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

They came to Balaam

You may prefer to say “They went to Balaam” (See: **Go and Come (p.1378)**) (See: **Go and Come (p.1378)**)

spoke to him Balak’s words

Alternate translation: “told him the message from Balak”

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Numbers 22:8

I will bring you

Balaam's report is spoken of as if it were something that he would carry to the messengers. Alternate translation: "I will tell you" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 22:9

God came to Balaam

Alternate translation: "God appeared to Balaam"

Who are these men who came to you?

Yahweh uses a question to introduce a new topic of conversation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "Tell me about these men who came to you." (See:

Rhetorical Question (p.1426)) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426))**)

Numbers 22:10

Balak & Zippor

These are the names of men. See how you translated these in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Numbers 22:11

Look & drive them out

Balaam restates the message that Balak sent to him. See how you translated these phrases in [Numbers 22:5-6](#).

drive them out

Alternate translation: "chase them away"

Numbers 22:12

because they have been blessed

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: “because I have blessed them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 22:13

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Numbers 22:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 22:15

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Numbers 22:16

They came to Balaam

You may prefer to say "They went to Balaam" (See: **Go and Come (p.1378)**) (See: **Go and Come (p.1378)**)

Numbers 22:17

this people

The singular noun refers to the Israelites as a group. Alternate translation: “this group of people”

Numbers 22:18

Balak

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Even if Balak would give me his palace full of silver and gold

Balaam is describing something that would never happen. He is emphasizing that there is nothing that could make him disobey Yahweh. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**)

I cannot go beyond the word of Yahweh & and do less or more than what he tells me

This means Balaam cannot disobey Yahweh in any way.

Numbers 22:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 22:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 22:21

saddled his donkey

A saddle is a seat put on the back of an animal in order to ride it.

Numbers 22:22

And the nose of God burned

This is an idiom that speaks of the increase in God's anger as if his **nose** was starting to burn. Alternate translation: "And God became very angry" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

as someone hostile to Balaam

Alternate translation: "as an enemy to Balaam" or "in order to stop Balaam"

Numbers 22:23

with his drawn sword

A sword is drawn from its sheath in order to be ready to use. Alternate translation: “with his sword ready to attack” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

The donkey turned off the road and went into a field

The donkey did this to avoid the angel of Yahweh.

to turn her back

Sometimes animals are referred to as “her” or “she.” Alternate translation: “to turn it back”

Numbers 22:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 22:25

She went against the wall

This was an attempt to escape from the angel of Yahweh in the road.

She went

Sometimes animals are referred to as “her” or “she.” Alternate translation: “It went”

pinned Balaam’s foot against it

Alternate translation: “pushed Balaam’s foot against it” or “hurt Balaam’s foot against it”

Numbers 22:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 22:27

and the nose of Balaam burned

This is an idiom that speaks of the increase in Balaam's anger as if his **nose** was starting to burn. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 22:22](#). Alternate translation: "And Balaam became very angry" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 22:28

Then Yahweh opened the donkey's mouth so she could talk

Opening the mouth is associated with the ability to speak. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh gave the donkey the ability to speak like a human would speak" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

She said to Balaam

Alternate translation: "The donkey said to Balaam"

Numbers 22:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 22:30

Am not I your donkey on which you have ridden all your life long to this present day?

This rhetorical question was used to convict Balaam that his judgment of the donkey was unfair. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I am your donkey on which you have ridden all your life, right up to the present moment." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Have I ever been in the habit of doing such things to you before?

This rhetorical question was used to further convict Balaam that his judgment of the donkey was unfair. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I have never been in the habit of doing such things to you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 22:31

Then Yahweh opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of Yahweh

To "open one's eyes" is associated with being able to see. Alternate translation: "Then Yahweh gave Balaam the ability to see the angel of Yahweh" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

with his drawn sword

A sword is drawn from its sheath in order to be ready to use. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:23](#). Alternate translation: "with his sword ready to attack" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Balaam lowered his head and lay facedown

This indicates that Balaam is humbling himself before the angel. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 22:32

Why have you struck your donkey these three times?

This rhetorical question is used to accuse Balaam of doing wrong. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not have struck your donkey these three times." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

as someone hostile to you

Alternate translation: "as an enemy to you" or "to oppose you"

Numbers 22:33

If she had not turned & killed you and spared her life

This hypothetical statement indicated what could have happened, but it did not because the donkey's actions saved Balaam. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**)

Numbers 22:34

So now, if it is displeasing to you

Alternate translation: "So if you do not want me to continue going"

Numbers 22:35

with the leaders of Balak

See how you translated “Balak” in [Numbers 22:2](#). Alternate translation: “with the leaders whom Balak had sent”

Numbers 22:36

Arnon

This is the name of a river. See how you translated it in [Numbers 21:13](#).

Numbers 22:37

Did I not send men to you to summon you?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke Balaam for delaying to come. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely I sent men to summon you." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Why did you not come to me?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke Balaam for delaying to come. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should have come to me!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Am I not able to honor you?

This rhetorical question is used to rebuke Balaam for delaying to come. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "Surely you know that I am able to pay you money for coming to me." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 22:38

Do I now have any power to say anything?

Balaam uses this rhetorical question to tell Balak that he will not be able to do everything that Balak asks him to do. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: “But I have no power to say anything I want” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

the words that God puts into my mouth

The message is spoken of as if it is something that God put into his mouth. Alternate translation: “the message that God wants me to say” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 22:39

Kiriath Huzoth

This is the name of a town. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 22:40

some meat

Alternate translation: "some of the meat from the sacrifices"

Numbers 22:41

the high place of Baal

This could mean: (1) this refers to the same place as Bamoth in [Numbers 21:19](#). The word Bamoth means “the high place,” or (2) this is another high place where people sacrificed to Baal.

Numbers 23

Numbers 23 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Balaam continues in this chapter.

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the poetry in 23:7-10, 18-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

Cursing God's people

God does not allow others to curse his people. Balaam blessed Israel twice when he was supposed to curse them. This may be taken as humor or an ironic situation. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/curse\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/peopleofgod\]\]](#))

Numbers 23:1

Balak

This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

prepare seven bulls and seven rams

Alternate translation: “kill seven bulls and seven rams as a sacrifice”

Numbers 23:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 23:3

Stand at your burnt offering and I will go

Alternate translation: "Stay here with your burnt offering and I will go a distance away"

Numbers 23:4

I have offered up a bull and a ram

It has already been stated that he killed these animals as a burnt offering. Alternate translation: "I have killed a bull and a ram and burnt them as an offering" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 23:5

Yahweh put a message in Balaam's mouth

Here Yahweh giving Balaam a message to speak is spoken of as if Yahweh placed it in his mouth. Alternate translation: "Yahweh told Balaam what he wanted him to say to Balak" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 23:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 23:7

Balak has brought me from Aram & the king of Moab from the eastern mountains

These phrases mean the same thing. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

‘Come, curse Jacob for me,’ & ‘Come, defy Israel.’

Both of these statements mean the same thing. They emphasize that Balak wants Balaam to curse the people of Israel. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 23:8

How can I curse those whom God has not cursed? How can I oppose those whom Yahweh does not oppose?

These rhetorical questions emphasize Balaam's refusal to disobey God. They can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "But I cannot curse those whom God has not cursed. I cannot fight against those whom Yahweh does not fight!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 23:9

from the top of the rocks I see him & from the hills I look at him

These two phrases mean the same thing. Balaam viewed Israel from the top of a hill. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

I see him & I look at him

Here “him” is a metonym that refers to the people of Israel. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

there is a people

Alternate translation: “there is a group of people”

do not consider themselves as just an ordinary nation

This negative statement is used to stress that the opposite is true. Alternate translation: “they consider themselves to be a special nation” (See: **Litotes (p.1396)**) (See: **Litotes (p.1396)**)

Numbers 23:10

Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel

Here **dust of Jacob** is a metaphor that speaks of the number of Israelites as if they were as numerous as the specks of dust. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Who can count the dust of Jacob or number the fourth part of Israel

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "There are too many Israelites to count. No one could count even a fourth of them because there are so many." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

the death of a righteous person

It is understood that this will be a peaceful death. This can be stated. Alternate translation: "the peaceful death of a righteous person" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

a righteous person & like his

These are metonymies that refer to the people of Israel as a single person. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 23:11

Balak

This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

What have you done to me?

Balak uses this question to scold Balaam. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "I cannot believe you did this to me!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

but look

This emphasizes the shocking action that follows.

Numbers 23:12

Should I not be careful to say only what Yahweh puts in my mouth?

Balaam uses this rhetorical question to defend his actions. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "I must be very careful to say only what Yahweh tells me to say." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

to say only what Yahweh puts in my mouth

The message is spoken of as if it is something that God put into his mouth. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 22:38](#). Alternate translation: "to say only what Yahweh wants me to say" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 23:13

There you will curse them for me

Alternate translation: "There you will curse the Israelites for me"

Numbers 23:14

field of Zophim

Translators may add a footnote that says: "The word 'Zophim' means 'to watch' or 'to spy.'" (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Mount Pisgah

This is the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in [Numbers 21:20](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 23:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 23:16

put a message in his mouth

The message is spoken of as if it is something that God put into his mouth. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 22:38](#). Alternate translation: “told him what to say” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

He said

Alternate translation: “Then Yahweh said”

Numbers 23:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 23:18

Balak, and hear & Listen to me, you son of Zippor

These two phrases mean the same thing and are repeated to emphasize how important it was for Balak to pay attention. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Balak & son of Zippor

See how you translated these names in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Numbers 23:19

Has he said and not done, Or spoken and not made it arise

Both of these clauses mean the same thing and emphasize that God does what he says he will. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Has he said and not done, Or spoken and not made it arise

These rhetorical questions can be translated as statements. Alternate translation: "He has never promised a thing without fulfilling what he promised. He has always done exactly what he said he would do." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 23:20

I have been commanded to bless

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God has commanded me to bless the Israelites" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 23:21

hardship in Jacob & trouble in Israel

These two phrases mean the same thing. This could mean: (1) God has given Israel only good things or (2) there is no sin in Israel that would cause him to judge them. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

shouts for their king are among them

Alternate translation: "they shout with joy because Yahweh is their king"

Numbers 23:22

with strength like that of a wild ox

This simile says that Yahweh's great strength is equal to an ox. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 23:23

For there is no omen against Jacob, and no divination against Israel

These two lines mean the same thing, that no curse that anyone puts on the nation of **Israel** will be effective. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

For there is no omen against Jacob, and no divination against Israel

Here **Jacob** is a metonym that refers to **Israel**. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

it must be said

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. "people must say" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Look what God has done!

It is implied that what God did for them was good. Alternate translation: "Look at the good things God has done for them!"

Numbers 23:24

the people rise like a lioness & he has killed

This verse is a long metaphor that speaks of Israel defeating her enemies as if Israel was a lion devouring its prey.
(See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 23:25

Balak

This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Numbers 23:26

Did I not tell you that I must say all that Yahweh tells me to say?

Balaam uses this rhetorical question to remind Balak that Balaam refused to disobey God even before he came to Balak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "I told you before that I must say all that Yahweh tells me to say." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 23:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 23:28

which looks down on the wilderness

It is understood that this wilderness was where Israel was camped. Alternate translation: “which looks down on the wilderness where Israel was” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 23:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 23:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 24

Numbers 24 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Balaam continues in this chapter.

Some translations set each line of poetry farther to the right than the rest of the text to make it easier to read. The ULT does this with the poetry in 24:3-9, 15-24.

Special concepts in this chapter

Cursing God's people

God does not allow others to curse his people. Balaam blesses Israel again and the king is angry and sends him home. This may be taken as humor or an ironic situation. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/curse\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/peopleofgod\]\]](#))

Numbers 24:1

as at the other times

Alternate translation: "like he did the previous times"

Numbers 24:2

He raised his eyes

Here “raised his eyes” is an idiom that means to look up. Alternate translation: “He looked up” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Spirit of God came on him

This mean's God's Spirit took control of him to prophesy.

Numbers 24:3

He received this prophecy

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “God gave him this prophecy” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Balaam son of Beor

Beor was Balaam’s father. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:5](#).

whose eyes are wide open

This idiom means he sees and understands clearly. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 24:4

He speaks & He sees & he bows

Here Balaam refers to himself as “He.” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1373)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1373)**)

he bows down

This is an act of humility. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

with his eyes open

Here “eyes open” is an idiom that means Balaam has received the ability to know what God wants to say. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 24:5

How beautiful are your tents, Jacob, the place where you live, Israel!

Both of these statements mean the same thing. They emphasize the Israelite camp was beautiful to Balaam. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 24:6

Like valleys they spread out

Balaam speaks of the Israelies as if they were numerous enough to cover entire valleys. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

like gardens by the riverside

Balaam speaks of the Israelies as if they were well-watered gardens that produce an abundant harvest. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

like aloes Yahweh has planted

Aloes are plants with a pleasant smell that grow well even in dry conditions. (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1438)**) (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1438)**)

like aloes Yahweh has planted

Balaam speaks of the Israelites as if they would thrive and be pleasant like aloe plants. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

like cedars beside the waters

Cedar trees were the largest trees in Israel. Balaam speaks of the Israelies as if they grew as large as well-watered cedar trees. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 24:7

Water flows & well-watered

Abundant water is associated with God's blessing on the crops of the land. Alternate translation: "God will bless Israel with plenty of water for their crops" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

their seed is well-watered

Well-watered seed refers to God's blessing on his people so that they will have abundant crops. Alternate translation: "they will have plenty of water for their seed to grow healthy crops" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Their king is to be higher & their kingdom will be honored

These two phrases have similar meaning, emphasizing how much God will bless them compared to other nations. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

And his king will be higher than Agag

Here **higher** refers to having greater honor and power. This means the future king of Israel will have more honor and will be more powerful than **Agag**. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

And his king will be higher than Agag

Agag was king of the Amalekites. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

their kingdom will be honored

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "other people will give honor to their kingdom" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 24:8

God brings him

Alternate translation: "God brings the Israelites"

with strength like a wild ox

This simile emphasizes that the Israelites have great strength. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

He will eat up the nations

Balaam speaks of the Israelites as if they are wild animals that eat their enemies. This means they will destroy their enemies. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 24:9

General Information:

General Information:

Balaam finishes the prophecy under the control of the Spirit of God.

He crouches down like a lion, like a lioness

In this simile, Balaam compares the Israelites to both male and female lions. This means they are dangerous and always ready to attack. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Who dares disturb him?

Balaam uses a question to warn all the people to not provoke the Israelites. This can be translated as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one dares to disturb him!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

May everyone who blesses him be blessed; may everyone who curses him be cursed

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: "May God bless those who bless the Israelites; may he curse those who curse the Israelites" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 24:10

And the nose of Balak burned

This is an idiom that speaks of the increase in Balak's anger as if his nose was starting to burn. Alternate translation: "And Balak became very angry" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

struck his hands together in anger

This was a sign of great frustration and anger. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 24:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 24:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 24:13

Even if Balak gave me his palace full of silver and gold

Balaam is describing something that would never happen. This statement emphasizes that there is nothing that would make Balaam disobey God. (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**) (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1391)**)

Did I not say this to them?

Balaam uses a question to remind Balak about what he said earlier. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. "Alternate translation: I said this to them." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 24:14

this people

Alternate translation: "the Israelites"

Numbers 24:15

Balaam son of Beor

Beor was Balaam's father. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:5](#).

whose eyes are wide open

This idiom means he sees and understands clearly. See how you translated this in [Numbers 24:3](#). (See: **Idiom (p. 1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 24:16

who has knowledge from the Most High

The abstract term “knowledge” can be stated as an action. Alternate translation: “who knows things that God Most High has revealed to him” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

bows down

This is a sign of submission to God. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 24:17

I see him, but he is not here now. I look at him, but he is not near

Both of these statements mean the same thing. Balaam is having a vision of a future event. The word “him” refers to a future leader of Israel. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

A star will come out of Jacob

Here “star” refers to an Israelite king that will rise in power. (See: **Symbolic Language (p.1434)**) (See: **Symbolic Language (p.1434)**)

out of Jacob

Here “Jacob” refers to the descendants of Jacob. Alternate translation: “from among the descendants of Jacob” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

a scepter will rise out of Israel

This means the same thing as the first part of the sentence. Here “scepter” refers to a powerful king. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

out of Israel

Here “Israel” refers to future Israelites. Alternate translation: “from among the Israelites in the future” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

shatter Moab’s leaders

This could mean: (1) he will break the heads of the leaders of Moab or (2) he will destroy the leaders of Moab.

all the descendants of Seth

This also refers to the Moabites, who were descendants of Seth.

Numbers 24:18

General Information:

General Information:

Balaam finishes the first of his four prophecies.

Edom will become a possession of Israel

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 will occupy Edom" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

and Seir will become a possession

Here **Seir** refers to the people who lived near Mount Seir. Alternate translation: "and the people of Seir will become a possession" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

and Seir will become a 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: "Israel will also conquer the people of Seir" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 24:19

Out of Jacob a king will come

Jacob was the ancestor of the Israelites. "Jacob" is a metonym that refers to the whole people group. (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

of their city

This refers to the city of Ar where Balak met Balaam. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 24:20

his final end

A singular pronoun is used because the Amalekites are spoken of as a single person. (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1373)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1373)**)

Numbers 24:21

the Kenites

This is the name of a people group who descended from Kain. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

The place where you live is strong

Alternate translation: "The place where you live is well defended"

your nest is in the rocks

This is a metaphor that means that they live in a secure place. Alternate translation: "your location is as secure as a nest high in the rocks" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 24:22

Nevertheless you Kenites will be consumed by fire when Assyria carries you away captive

Here the destruction of the Kenites is spoken of as if they were burned up in a 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: "Nevertheless the Assyrians will destroy you Kenites like a fire, and take you away as captives" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 24:23

Who will survive when God does this?

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this question as a statement. Alternate translation: "No one will survive when God does this!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 24:24

Kittim

This is the name of a city on an island in the Mediterranean Sea. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

they, too, will end in destruction

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **destruction**, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: "God will destroy them also" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 24:25

Balak

This is the king of Moab. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:2](#).

Numbers 25

Numbers 25 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The story of Balaam concludes in this chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Foreign women

Balaam told the young women from Moab to act friendly to the Israelite men and invite them to feasts in honor of their god Baal. The men went to the feasts and worshiped Baal. God was angry and killed 24,000 Israelite men. Foreign women are often the source of problems in Israel. They caused the men to worship their false gods. (See: **god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry (p.1451)**)

Numbers 25:1

Shittim

This is the name of a place in Moab. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 25:2

bowed down

This was an act of worship. (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 25:3

Peor

Peor was the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in [Numbers 23:28](#).

And the nose of Yahweh burned

This is an idiom that speaks of the increase in Yahweh's anger as if his nose was starting to burn. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 21:20](#). Alternate translation: "And Yahweh became very angry" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 25:4

all the leaders of the people

It is implied that this refers to the leaders who were guilty of idolatry. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “all the leaders of the people who are guilty of idolatry” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

to expose them in the daylight

This means that the leaders of Israel will kill these people and leave their dead bodies out where all the people can see them.

Numbers 25:5

to Israel's leaders

Alternate translation: "to Israel's leaders who were not guilty of idolatry"

Peor

Peor was the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in [Numbers 23:28](#).

Numbers 25:6

brought among his family members a Midianite woman

It is implied that he brought her among his camp to have sex with her. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “brought a Midianite woman to the Israelite camp to sleep with her” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

in the sight of Moses and all the community of the people of Israel

Here “in the sight of” is an idiom that means they heard about it, or found out about it. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 25:7

Eleazar

This is the name of Aaron's son. See how you translated it in [Numbers 3:2](#).

Numbers 25:8

He followed

Alternate translation: "Phinehas followed"

Numbers 25:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 25:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 25:11

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

Yahweh begins to speak to Moses.

turned my rage away from the people of Israel

God's rage is spoken of as if it were something that could be physically pushed aside in order to stop it. Alternate translation: "caused me to no longer be angry with the people of Israel" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

I have not consumed the people of Israel in my fierceness

God is spoken of as if he were a fierce animal that could have eaten up the people of Israel. Alternate translation: "I have not destroyed the people of Israel in my terrible anger" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 25:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 25:13

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

This is the end of Yahweh's speech that begins in verse 11.

Numbers 25:14

Now

This switches from the main story line to background information about Zimri and Kozbi. (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**) (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**)

who was killed

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: “whom Phinehas killed” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Zimri & Salu

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 25:15

Zur

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Kozbi

This is the name of a woman. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 25:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 25:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 25:18

with their deceitfulness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **deceitfulness**, you can express the same idea with a verbal form. Alternate translation: "by deceiving you" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

They led you into evil

Alternate translation: "They persuaded you to do this evil thing"

in the case of Peor & in the matter of Peor

Both of these phrases mean that these things happened at Mount Peor.

Peor

Peor was the name of a mountain. See how you translated this in [Numbers 23:28](#).

who was killed

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: "whom Phinehas killed" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26

Numbers 26 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULT sets the lines in 26:12-17, 20-26, 29-32, 35, 38-39, 44-45, 48-49, 57-58 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are long lists.

The people are counted in preparation for entering into the Promised Land. (See: **Promised Land (p.1463)**)

Special concepts in this chapter

A new generation

None of the adults who came out of Egypt with Moses were still alive except the two faithful spies, Joshua and Caleb. (See: **faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy (p.1448)**)

Numbers 26:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:2

Count all the community

They were only to count the men, not the women. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Count all the men of the community" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

twenty years old and up

Alternate translation: "20 years old and older" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:3

spoke to them

Alternate translation: “spoke to the Israelite leaders”

plains

A plain is a large flat area of land.

Numbers 26:4

twenty years old and up

Alternate translation: "20 years old and older" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:5

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

was the firstborn of Israel

Here "Israel" refers to the man also known as Jacob.

From his son

The word "his" refers to Rueben.

Numbers 26:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:7

43,730 men

Alternate translation: "forty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:8

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Eliab

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 16:1](#).

Numbers 26:9

Eliab & Dathan & Abiram

See how you translated these men's names in [Numbers 16:1](#).

Numbers 26:10

The earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up

Here the earth is spoken of as if it were a person opening its mouth and eating something. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused the earth to split open, and the men fell in the hole" (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

fire devoured 250 men

Here the fire is spoken of as if it were a large animal devouring something. Alternate translation: "Yahweh caused a fire that killed 250 men" (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

250 men

Alternate translation: "two hundred and fifty men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:11

Korah's line

Alternate translation: "all of Korah's family"

die out

Alternate translation: "end"

Numbers 26:12

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:14

22,200 men

Alternate translation: "twenty-two thousand two hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:15

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:18

40,500 men

Alternate translation: "forty thousand five hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:19

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:22

76,500 men

Alternate translation: "seventy-six thousand five hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:23

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:25

64,300 men

Alternate translation: "sixty-four thousand three hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:26

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:27

60,500 men

Alternate translation: "sixty thousand five hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:28

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:30

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:33

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:34

52,700 men

Alternate translation: "fifty-two thousand seven hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:35

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:36

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:37

32,500 men

Alternate translation: “thirty-two thousand five hundred men” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

These were Joseph’s descendants, counted

The word “these” refers to all of the men descended from Joseph’s sons, Ephraim and Manasseh. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “These were Joseph’s descendants, descended from his sons Manasseh and Ephraim, counted” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

counted in each of 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: “they counted them in each of their clans” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26:38

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:39

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:41

45,600 men

Alternate translation: "forty-five thousand six hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:42

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:43

64,400 men

Alternate translation: "sixty-four thousand four hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:44

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:46

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:47

53,400 men

Alternate translation: "fifty-three thousand four hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:48

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Israel are counting the men, 20 years old and older, according to their tribes and families. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 26:49

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:50

45,400 men

Alternate translation: "forty-five thousand four hundred men" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:51

the complete count

Alternate translation: "the total number"

601,730

Alternate translation: "six-hundred and one thousand, seven hundred and thirty" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 26:52

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 26:53

The land must be divided

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "You must divide the land" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

these men

This refers to all of the men that were counted in their clans, beginning in [Numbers 26:5](#).

according to the number of their names

Alternate translation: "by the number of people in each clan"

Numbers 26:54

give more inheritance

In this passage, the word “inheritance” refers to land inherited. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “give more land as an inheritance” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

who were counted

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: “whom the leaders of Israel counted” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26:55

the land must be divided

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “you must divide the land” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

by random lots

Alternate translation: “by casting lots”

it will be divided

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “you will divide it” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26:56

distributed to them

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and you must distribute the land to them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26:57

General Information:

General Information:

This is a list of the Levite clans. Moses counts the Levites separately from the other tribes because they did not receive any land. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

counted clan by clan

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 leaders also counted clan by clan” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Gershon & Kohath & Merari

See how you translated these men's names in [Numbers 3:17](#).

Numbers 26:58

Amram's

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:19](#).

Numbers 26:59

Amram

See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 3:19](#).

She bore to Amram their children

Alternate translation: "She and Amram had children"

Numbers 26:60

Nadab & Abihu & Ithamar

See how you translated these men's names in [Numbers 3:2](#).

Numbers 26:61

they offered before Yahweh unacceptable fire

Here the word "fire" is used to refer to "burning incense." See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 3:4](#).
Alternate translation: "they burned an incense offering to Yahweh in a way that he did not approve of" (See:

Metonymy (p.1406)) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 26:62

who were counted

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: “whom the leaders counted” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

23, 000

Alternate translation: “twenty-three thousand” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

one month old and up

Alternate translation: “one month old and older”

they were not counted

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: “but the leaders did not count them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

because an inheritance in the midst of the sons of Israel was not given to them

Here, **inheritance** refers to land they inherited. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “because land in the midst of the sons of Israel was not given to them” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

because an inheritance in the midst of the sons of Israel was not given to them

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “because Yahweh said they would not receive any land as an inheritance” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26:63

who were counted by Moses and Eleazar the priest

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: “whom Moses and Eleazar the priest counted” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26:64

there was no man

Alternate translation: "there were no men"

who had been counted by Moses and Aaron the priest

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: "whom Moses and Aaron the priest had counted" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

when the descendants of Israel were counted

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: "when they counted the descendants of Israel" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 26:65

There was not a man left among them, except

The word “them” refers to all of the people who were counted in the wilderness of Sinai. This can be stated in positive form. Alternate translation: “The only ones who were still alive were” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**) (See: **Double Negatives (p.1361)**)

son of Jephunneh

Jephunneh was Caleb’s father. See how you translated this in [Numbers 13:6](#).

son of Nun

Nun was Joshua’s father. See how you translated this in [Numbers 11:28](#).

Numbers 27

Numbers 27 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Daughters

The daughters of Korah received no land because their father was punished by Yahweh. Yahweh still graciously gave them their father's portion of land. (See: **grace, gracious (p.1453)**)

The new leader is Joshua

God told Moses to appoint Joshua as the new leader. Joshua became Yahweh's anointed leader. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/appoint\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/anoint\]\]](#))

Numbers 27:1

Then to Moses came the daughters of Zelophehad & son of Joseph

This tells us the genealogy of Zelophehad. Alternate translation: “Then the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hephher son of Gilead son of Machir son of Manasseh, of the clans of Manasseh son of Joseph came to Moses”

Zelophehad son of Hephher & Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah

See how you translated these men’s names in [Numbers 26:33](#).

Gilead & Machir

See how you translated these men’s names in [Numbers 26:29](#).

Numbers 27:2

They stood

Alternate translation: "The daughters of Zelophehad stood"

Numbers 27:3

who conspired against Yahweh in the company of Korah

The people in the company of Korah gathered together and rebelled against Yahweh. Yahweh caused them to die, because of their sin. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “who died because they were among Korah's followers who rebelled against Yahweh” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

for his own sin

Alternate translation: “because of his own sin”

Numbers 27:4

Why should our father's name be taken away from among his clan members because he had no son?

At that time, only sons received land as an inheritance. The daughters use this question to suggest that they should receive the inheritance and continue the family clan. This can be written as a statement. Alternate translation: "You should not remove our father's name from the clan members just because he did not have a son." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Give us land among our father's relatives

This means that they are asking to inherit land near where their father's relatives are inheriting land. The meaning of this can be made clear. Alternate translation: "Give us land where our father's relatives live" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 27:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 27:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 27:7

among their father's relatives

This means that they will be inherit land where their father's relatives are inheriting land. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "where their father's relatives live" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 27:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 27:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 27:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 27:11

be a law established by decree for the people of Israel

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: “be a law that all the people of Israel must obey” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

has commanded me

Here “me” refers to Moses.

Numbers 27:12

mountains of Abarim

This is a range of mountains in Moab. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

that I have given to the people of Israel

Here Yahweh speaks about the land that he is giving the Israel as if he has already given it to them. He speaks this way to emphasize that he is committed to give it to them. Alternate translation: "that I will give to the people of Israel" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 27:13

you, too, must be gathered to your people

This is a euphemism that means Moses will die and his spirit will go to the place where his ancestors are. Alternate translation: “you must die” (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

like Aaron your brother

You can make clear the understood information that Aaron died. Alternate translation: “like your older brother Aaron died” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 27:14

you two rebelled

This refers to Moses and Aaron.

wilderness of Zin

See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 13:21](#).

when the water flowed from the rock, in your anger

This refers to an event when Yahweh made water miraculously flow out of a rock. God told Moses to speak to the rock. Instead, Moses hit the rock because he was angry with the people. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

you failed to honor me as holy

Alternate translation: "you did not treat me as holy"

before the eyes of the whole community

Here the people of the people are represented by their "eyes" to emphasize what they saw. Alternate translation: "in front of the whole community" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

waters of Meribah

See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 20:13](#).

Numbers 27:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 27:16

the God of the spirits of all humanity

This could mean: (1) here “spirits” refers to all people.” Alternate translation: “the God over all of humanity” or (2) the reference to “spirits” refers to God having given life and breath to all people. Alternate translation: “the God who gives breath to all people” or “the God who give life to all humanity” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

a man over the community

To be “over” a group of people means to have authority to lead them. Alternate translation: “a man to lead the community” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 27:17

a man who may go out and come in before them and lead them out and bring them in

This is an idiom that means a person who will lead all the people and also lead the army into battle. (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

so that your community is not like sheep that have no shepherd

This is a simile that means without a leader the people will wander and be helpless. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 27:18

Take Joshua son of Nun, a man in whom my Spirit lives

Yahweh's Spirit is in Joshua, meaning that Joshua obeys Yahweh and follows his commands.

lay your hand on him

This is a sign of dedicating someone to God's service. Alternate translation: "lay your hand on him to appoint him"
(See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

Numbers 27:19

command him before their eyes to lead them

Here the people are represented by their “eyes” to emphasize what they see. Alternate translation: “in front of all of them command Joshua to lead the people of Israel” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 27:20

You must put some of your authority on him

Here Yahweh speaks of Moses giving some of his authority to Joshua as if it were an article of clothing that he could put on him. Alternate translation: “You should give him some of your authority” or “Let him decide what the people should do” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 27:21

Urim

This was a sacred stone that the High Priest wore on his chest plate. He used it to determine God's will. (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1438)**) (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1438)**)

It will be at his command that the people will go out and come in

This means that Joshua will have authority to command the movements of the community of Israel. "Going out" and "coming in" are two opposite commands used to emphasize that he will have full command over their movements. Alternate translation: "He will command the community's movements" (See: **Merism (p.1398)**) (See: **Merism (p.1398)**)

both he and all the people of Israel with him, the whole community

Both of these phrases mean the same thing, and they are used together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "both he and the entire nation of Israel" (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

Numbers 27:22

placed him before

Alternate translation: "told him to stand in front of"

Numbers 27:23

He laid his hands on him and commanded him to lead

Alternate translation: "He" refers to Moses, and "him" refers to Joshua.

He laid his hands on him

The laying on of hands was a way of setting a person apart to do a special task for God. (See: **Symbolic Action (p. 1432)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1432)**)

to lead

You can make clear the understood information to lead the people. Alternate translation: "to lead the people" or "to be the leader of the Israelites" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

as Yahweh had commanded him to do

Here "him" refers to Moses.

Numbers 28

Numbers 28 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Offerings for special days

God commanded the Israelites to make special offerings for Sabbaths, new months, Passover and firstfruits. On each of these occasions, specific sacrifices were required. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/sabbath\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/passover\]\]](#) and **firstfruits (p.1450)**)

Numbers 28:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 28:2

at the appointed times

Alternate translation: "at the times that I haven chosen"

the food of my offerings made by fire to produce

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 food offerings that you will burn on the altar produce" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

a sweet aroma for me

Alternate translation: "a smell I enjoy"

Numbers 28:3

the offering 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. "the burnt offering" or "the offering you have burned by fire on the altar" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 28:5

mixed with

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. "which you have mixed with" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

and the tenth of an ephah of

A **tenth** means one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and the tenth of an ephah of

You can express this in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters of" or "a tenth of an ephah (which is about 2 liters) of" (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

the fourth of a hin of

One **fourth** means one part out of four equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

the fourth of a hin of

You can express this in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "a liter of" or "one-fourth of a hin (which is almost 1 liter) of" (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

beaten oil

This refers to oil that has been pressed out of olives. Alternate translation: "pressed oil" or "pure olive oil"

Numbers 28:6

that was commanded at Mount Sinai

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 Yahweh commanded at Mount Sinai” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

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 you burned on the altar” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:7

shall be the fourth of a hin

The **fourth** means one part out of four equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

shall be the fourth of a hin

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “shall be a liter” or “shall be one-fourth of a hin (which is almost 1 liter)” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

You must pour out in the holy place a drink offering of strong drink to Yahweh

This sentence describes the drink offering that is to accompany the lamb. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “It must be a drink offering of strong drink and you must pour it out in the holy place to Yahweh” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 28:8

like the one offered

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: “like the one you offered” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:9

and two-tenths fine flour

The **two-tenths** means two parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and two-tenths fine flour

The words “of an ephah” are understood and you may state them clearly. Alternate translation: “and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

mixed with oil

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 you have mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

the drink offering with it

Many offerings had a drink offering that was required to be offered with them. The full meaning of the can be made clear. Alternate translation: “the drink offering that accompanies it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 28:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 28:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 28:12

and three-tenths fine flour

The **three-tenths** means three parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and three-tenths fine flour

The words “of an ephah” are understood and you may state them clearly. Alternate translation: “and three-tenths of an ephah of fine flour” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

mixed with oil

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 you have mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

and two-tenths fine flour

The **two-tenths** means two parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and two-tenths fine flour

The words “of an ephah” are understood and you may state them clearly. Alternate translation: “and two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

and two-tenths fine flour

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “and four and a half liters of fine flour” or “and two-tenths of an ephah (which is about 4.5 liters) of fine flour” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

Numbers 28:13

and a tenth, a tenth fine flour

A **tenth** means one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and a tenth, a tenth fine flour

The words “of an ephah” are understood and you may state them clearly. Alternate translation: “and a tenth of an ephah of fine flour” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

and a tenth, a tenth fine flour

You can express this in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “2 liters of fine flour” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

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 you burned on the altar” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:14

half of a hin of

A **half** means one part out of two equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

half of a hin of

You can express this in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “two liters of” or “half a hin (which is two liters) of” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

and a third of a hin

A **third** means one part out of three equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and a third of a hin

You can express in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “1.2 liters of” or “one and one-fifth liters of” or “half a hin (which is 1.2 liters) of” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

and a fourth of a hin

A **fourth** means one part out of four equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and a fourth of a hin

You can express this in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “a liter” or “one-fourth of a hin (which is almost 1 liter)” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

Numbers 28:15

One male goat as a sin offering to Yahweh must be offered

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "You must offer one male goat to Yahweh as a sin offering" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:16

And in the first month, on day 14 of the month

This refers to the first **month** of the Hebrew calendar. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

comes Yahweh's Passover

Alternate translation: "you must celebrate Yahweh's Passover"

Numbers 28:17

And on day 15 of this month

This refers to the first **month** of the Hebrew calendar. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

a feast is to be held

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. "you must have a feast" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

bread without yeast must be eaten

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. "you must eat bread without yeast" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:18

On the first day

This refers to the **first day** of the feast. You can state this clearly. Alternate translation: “On day 1 of the feast” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

there must be a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

The phrase “a holy assembly” means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event. Alternate translation: “you must gather together to worship and honor Yahweh”

Numbers 28:19

you must offer a sacrifice made by fire, a burnt offering

The idea of “burnt” can be stated in active form. Alternate translation: “you must burn an offering on the altar”
(See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:20

three-tenths

The **three-tenths** means three parts out of ten equal parts. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/translate-fraction\]\]](#)) (See: [Fractions \(p.1376\)](#))

three-tenths

The words “of an ephah” are understood and you may state them clearly. Alternate translation: “three-tenths of an ephah” (See: [Ellipsis \(p.1366\)](#)) (See: [Ellipsis \(p.1366\)](#))

three-tenths

You can express this in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “six liters” (See: [Biblical Volume \(p.1352\)](#)) (See: [Biblical Volume \(p.1352\)](#))

mixed with oil

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 you have mixed with oil” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.1337\)](#)) (See: [Active or Passive \(p.1337\)](#))

and two-tenths

The **two-tenths** means two parts out of ten equal parts. (See: [Fractions \(p.1376\)](#)) (See: [Fractions \(p.1376\)](#))

and two-tenths

The words “of an ephah of fine flour” are understood from the previous phrase. You can repeat them here. Alternate translation: “two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour” (See: [Ellipsis \(p.1366\)](#)) (See: [Ellipsis \(p.1366\)](#))

and two-tenths

You can express this in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “four and a half liters” (See: [Biblical Volume \(p.1352\)](#)) (See: [Biblical Volume \(p.1352\)](#))

Numbers 28:21

A tenth, a tenth

A **tenth** means one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

A tenth, a tenth

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “2 liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

A tenth, a tenth

The words “of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil” are understood and you may state them clearly. Alternate translation: “One-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 28:22

to make atonement

The phrase “make atonement” can be expressed with the verb “atone.” Alternate translation: “to atone” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 28:23

required each morning

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 Yahweh requires each morning” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:24

As described here

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: “As I, Yahweh, have described here” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

the food of the offering 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: “you must burn the food offering on the altar” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

a sweet aroma for Yahweh

Alternate translation: “as a sweet aroma for Yahweh”

It must be offered

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “You must offer it” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:25

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

The phrase “a holy assembly” means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event. Alternate translation: “gather together to worship and honor Yahweh”

Numbers 28:26

the day of the firstfruits

This refers to the day during the Festival of Weeks when they offer the grain offering to Yahweh. Alternate translation: "the day of the firstfruits, that is the day"

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event. Alternate translation: "gather together to worship and honor Yahweh"

Numbers 28:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 28:28

mixed with the oil

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 you have mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

three-tenths

The **three-tenths** means three parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

three-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “six liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

two-tenths

The **two-tenths** means two parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

two-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “four and a half liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

two-tenths

The words “of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil” are understood from the previous phrase and can be repeated. Alternate translation: “two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour (which is about 4.5 liters) mixed with oil” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 28:29

a tenth, a tenth

A **tenth** means one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

a tenth, a tenth

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “2 liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour which you mix with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 28:30

to make atonement

The word “atonement” can be expressed with the verb “atone.” Alternate translation: “to atone” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 28:31

their drink offerings

This refers to the drink offerings that are required to accompany each of the animals when they are sacrificed.

Alternate translation: "the drink offerings that are offered with them" or "the drink offerings that accompany them"

(See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29

Numbers 29 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the material from the previous chapter about offerings on specific days.

Numbers 29:1

General Information:

General Information:

Yahweh continues telling Moses what the people must do.

And in the seventh month, on the first of the month

This refers to the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar. Alternate translation: "And on day 1 of month 7" (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event. Alternate translation: "gather together to worship and honor Yahweh"

It will be a day when you blow trumpets

The word "you" refers to the people of Israel who here represent the priests. The priests blew the trumpet to begin a worship service or to gather the community together. Alternate translation: "It will be a day when the priests blow trumpets" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 29:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 29:3

their grain offering

This refers to the grain offerings that are required to accompany each of the animals when they are sacrificed. Alternate translation: “the grain offerings that are offered with them” or “the grain offerings that accompany them” (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

mixed with oil

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 you have mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

three-tenths

The **three-tenths** means three parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

three-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “six liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

three-tenths

The phrase “of fine flour mixed with oil” is understood from the previous phrase and can be repeated. Alternate translation: “three-tenths of an ephah (which is about six liters) of fine flour mixed with oil” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

two-tenths

The **two-tenths** means two parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

two-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “four and a half liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

two-tenths

The phrase “of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil” is understood from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: “two-tenths of an ephah (which is about 4.5 liters) of fine flour mixed with oil” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 29:4

and one-tenth

The **one-tenth** means one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and one-tenth

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "2 liters" (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

and one-tenth

The phrase "of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil" is understood from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: "a tenth of an ephah (which is about 2 liters) of fine flour mixed with oil" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 29:5

to make atonement

The word “atonement” can be expressed with the verb “atone.” Alternate translation: “to atone” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

Numbers 29:6

of each month: the special burnt offering & with it

This is the offering that is made on the first day of each month. Alternate translation: “of each month—the special burnt offering ... with it”

the regular burnt offering, its grain offering, and its drink offerings

This refers to the offerings the priests were to give every day. The grain offering and drink offering were to be offered with the regular burnt offering. Alternate translation: “the regular burnt offering, with the grain offering and drink offerings that accompany it” (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

you will obey what has been decreed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “you will obey Yahweh’s decree” or “you will obey what Yahweh had decreed” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

an offering made by fire to 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: “an offering you burnt on the altar to Yahweh” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:7

And on the tenth of this seventh month

Alternate translation: "And on day 10 of month 7" (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

And on the tenth of this seventh month

The word **month** refers to those in the Hebrew calendar. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

The phrase "a holy assembly" means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event. Alternate translation: "gather together to worship and honor Yahweh"

Numbers 29:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 29:9

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour which you have mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

three-tenths

The **three-tenths** means three parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

three-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “six liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

three-tenths

The words “of an ephah” are understood from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “three-tenths of an ephah (which is about six liters)” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

two-tenths

The **two-tenths** means two parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

two-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “four and a half liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

two-tenths

The words “of an ephah” are understood from earlier in the verse. They can be repeated here. Alternate translation: “two-tenths of an ephah (which is about 4.5 liters)” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 29:10

a tenth, a tenth

The **tenth** means one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

a tenth, a tenth

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “2 liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

a tenth, a tenth

The words “of an ephah” are understood and you may state them clearly. Alternate translation: “a tenth of an ephah (which is about 2 liters)” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 29:11

of atonement

The word "atonement" can be expressed with the verb "atone." Alternate translation: "that atones for you" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1335)**)

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them" (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:12

And on day 15 of the seventh month

Alternate translation: “day 15 of month 7” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

And on day 15 of the seventh month

The word **month** refer to those in the Hebrew calendar. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

have a holy assembly to honor Yahweh

The phrase “a holy assembly” means the people gather together to worship Yahweh. Worshiping Yahweh is a holy event. Alternate translation: “gather together to worship and honor Yahweh”

you must keep the festival for him

This is an idiom. Here the word “keep” means to observe or celebrate. The word “him” refers to Yahweh. Alternate translation: “you must observe the festival for Yahweh” or “you must celebrate the festival for Yahweh” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 29:13

a sacrifice 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. "you must burn it on the altar" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

thirteen young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs

Alternate translation: "13 young bulls, 2 rams, and 14 male lambs" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 29:14

fine flour mixed with oil

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: “fine flour which you have mixed with oil” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

three-tenths

The **three-tenths** means three parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

three-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “six liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

three-tenths

The phrase “an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil” is understood from earlier in the sentence and can be repeated. Alternate translation: “three-tenths of an ephah (which is about six liters) of fine flour mixed with oil” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

thirteen bulls

Alternate translation: “13 bulls” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

two-tenths

The **two-tenths** means two parts out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

two-tenths

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: “four and a half liters” (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

two-tenths

The phrase “of an ephah of fine flour” is understood from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: “two-tenths of an ephah (which is about 4.5 liters) of fine flour mixed with oil” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 29:15

fourteen lambs

Alternate translation: "14 lambs" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

and a tenth, a tenth

The **tenth** means one part out of ten equal parts. (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**) (See: **Fractions (p.1376)**)

and a tenth, a tenth

This can be written in modern measurements. Alternate translation: "two liters" (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**) (See: **Biblical Volume (p.1352)**)

and a tenth, a tenth

The phrase "of fine flour" is understood from earlier in the sentence. Alternate translation: "a tenth of an ephah (which is about 2 liters) of fine flour mixed with oil" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 29:16

its grain offering, and the drink offering with it

The grain offering and drink offering accompany the regular burnt offering.

Numbers 29:17

On the second day of the assembly

Here the word “assembly” refers to the Festival of Weeks. Alternate translation: “On day 2 of the festival” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

twelve young bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs

Alternate translation: “12 young bulls, 2 rams, and 14 male lambs” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 29:18

as were commanded

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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:19

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. Drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: “along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them” (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:20

the third day of the assembly

Here the word “assembly” refers to the Festival of Weeks. Alternate translation: “day 3 of the festival” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

eleven bulls, two rams, and fourteen male lambs

Alternate translation: “11 bulls, 2 rams, and 14 male lambs” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 29:21

as were commanded

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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:22

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them" (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:23

the fourth day of the assembly

Here the word “assembly” refers to the Festival of Weeks. Alternate translation: “day 4 of the festival” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

fourteen male lambs

Alternate translation: “14 male lambs” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 29:24

as were commanded

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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:25

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them" (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:26

the fifth day of the assembly

Here the word “assembly” refers to the Festival of Weeks. Alternate translation: “day 5 of the festival” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

fourteen male lambs

Alternate translation: “14 male lambs” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 29:27

as were commanded

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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:28

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them" (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:29

the sixth day of the assembly

Here the word “assembly” refers to the Festival of Weeks. Alternate translation: “day 6 of the festival” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

fourteen male lambs

Alternate translation: “14 male lambs” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 29:30

as were commanded

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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:31

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them" (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:32

the seventh day of the assembly

Here the word “assembly” refers to the Festival of Weeks. Alternate translation: “day 7 of the festival” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

fourteen male lambs

Alternate translation: “14 male lambs” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 29:33

as were commanded

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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:34

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them" (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:35

General Information:

General Information:

Yahweh tells Moses what the people must do after the seven-day festival in the seventh month.

eighth day

This "eighth" is the ordinal number for eight. (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

have another solemn assembly

This is another assembly similar to the one on the first day of the festival. Alternate translation: "gather together again to worship Yahweh"

Numbers 29:36

an offering 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: “you must burn it on the altar” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:37

their grain offering and their drink offerings

These offerings were to be offered with the bull, the ram, and the lambs. Alternate translation: “the grain offerings and the drink offerings” (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

as were commanded

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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 29:38

its grain offering, and their drink offerings

The grain offering was to be offered with the burnt offering. The drink offerings were to be offered with both the sin offering and the burnt offering. Alternate translation: "along with the grain offering and the drink offerings that accompany them" (See: **Possession (p.1419)**) (See: **Possession (p.1419)**)

Numbers 29:39

These are what you must offer

Alternate translation: "These offerings are what you must offer"

fixed festivals

These are festivals that occurred at regularly scheduled times. The word "fixed" means "set" or "predetermined."

Alternate translation: "planned festivals"

Numbers 29:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 30

Numbers 30 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Vows

Because a vow is a type of promise, men must do what they have vowed to do. A father or a husband has one day in which to cancel a woman's vow. Otherwise, she must do what she vowed she would do. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/vow\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/promise\]\]](#))

Numbers 30:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 30:2

a man makes a vow

The words “a man” refer to any man, not one particular man. It refers only to men and does not include women.
Alternate translation: “any man”

to bind himself with a binding promise

Here Moses speaks of a person promising to do something as if his promise were a physical object that he ties to himself. Alternate translation: “committing to fulfill a promise” or “promising to do something” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

he must not break his word. He must keep his promise to do everything that comes out of his mouth

These two sentences have similar meanings and are combined to emphasize that he must fulfill his promises. Here “word” is a metonym that refers to what he said. (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

he shall not profane his word

The phrase **his word** refers to a man's oaths and vows. Alternate translation: “he must fulfill his promises” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

everything that comes out of his mouth

Here the word “mouth” is a metonym for the things that the man says. Alternate translation: “to do everything that he says he will do” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 30:3

binds herself with a promise

Here Moses speaks of a woman promising to do something as if her promise were a physical object that she ties to herself. Alternate translation: “commits herself to fulfilling a promise” or “promises to do something” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 30:4

the vow and the promise

These two phrases have very similar meanings. They emphasize what she has promised to do. Alternate translation: “the vow” (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**) (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**)

by which she has bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: “that she has committed herself to fulfill” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

he says nothing to reverse her

Alternate translation: “he does not cancel what she has said”

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and that she will be required to fulfill them. Alternate translation: “she will be obligated to fulfill” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 30:5

her vows or the pledges

These two phrases have very similar meanings. They emphasize what she has promised to do. Alternate translation: “her vows” (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**) (See: **Doublet (p.1364)**)

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and she will be required to fulfill them. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 30:4](#). Alternate translation: “she will be obligated to fulfill” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Yahweh will release her

This refers to Yahweh forgiving her for not fulfilling her vows. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: “Yahweh will forgive her for not fulfilling her vows” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 30:6

rash

something done without thinking

by which she has bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: “which she has committed herself to fulfill” (See:

Metaphor (p.1400)) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 30:7

says nothing to her

You may need to specify that he says nothing to her about her vow. Alternate translation: “says nothing to her about her vow” or “does not tell her to have Yahweh release her from the vow” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

by which she bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: “that she has committed herself to fulfill” See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4](#). (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and that she will be required to fulfill them. Alternate translation: “she will be obligated to fulfill” See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4](#). (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 30:8

the vow that she has made & the rash talk of her lips

These two phrases refer to the same thing. The second phrase describes the vow that the woman made. Alternate translation: “the vow that she has made ... that is, the rash talk of her lips” (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.1414)**)

the rash talk of her lips

The phrase “the rash talk” refers to the rash promise that she made. Here “her lips” means the woman herself. She is referred to as “her lips” because lips are related to what she says. Alternate translation: “the rash things she has said” or “her rash promise” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

with which she has bound herself

Here Moses speaks of how a woman has committed herself to fulfilling a promise as if her promise were a physical object that she had bound to her body. Alternate translation: “that she has committed herself to fulfill” See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4](#). (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 30:9

a divorced woman

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: “a woman whom a man has divorced” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

will stand against her

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and she will be required to fulfill them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 30:4](#). Alternate translation: “she will be obligated to fulfill” (See: **Idiom (p. 1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 30:10

If a woman made a vow in her husband's house

This refers to a married woman. You can make the meaning of this statement clear. Alternate translation: "If a married woman makes a vow" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 30:11

then all her vows will stand

This is an idiom. The phrase “will stand” means that her vows will remain in effect and she will be required to fulfill them. See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 30:4](#). Alternate translation: “then she must fulfill all her vows” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 30:12

then whatever came out of her lips

Here what the woman said is referred to as something that came out of her lips. Alternate translation: “then whatever she said” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

will not stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will not remain in effect and she will be not required to fulfill them. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 30:4](#). Alternate translation: “she will not be obligated to fulfill” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 30:13

binding oath to afflict her

an oath by which the woman says that unless she fulfills the oath, God or other poeple have the right to afflict her

Numbers 30:14

binding promises

Moses describes a woman's promises as if they were something that she is physically bound by. Alternate translation: "obligations" or "promises" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

will stand

This is an idiom. It means that her vows will remain in effect and that she will be required to fulfill them. Alternate translation: "she will be obligated to fulfill" See how this is translated in [Numbers 30:4](#). (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

because he has said nothing to her

You can make clear the understood information. Alternate translation: "because he has said nothing to her about them" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.1366)**)

Numbers 30:15

then he will be responsible for her guilt

This means that he will be guilty of her sin instead of her if she does not fulfill her vow. The full meaning of this statement can be made clear. Alternate translation: "if she does not fulfill her vow, she will not be guilty of her sin, and he will be guilty instead of her" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 30:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31

Numbers 31 General Notes

Special concepts in this chapter

Midianites

Israel killed the Midianites, including Balaam, for tempting them to worship Baal. This battle was at Yahweh's command. Yahweh would bring justice. (See: **just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification (p.1456)**)

Numbers 31:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:2

Take vengeance on the Midianites for what they did to the Israelites

Yahweh was punishing the Midianites for convincing the Israelites to worship idols.

you shall be gathered to your people

This is a polite way to emphasize that it is time for Moses to die and for his spirit to go to the place where his ancestors are. (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

Numbers 31:3

Arm some of your men for war

Alternate translation: "Give weapons to some of your men"

go against Midian and carry out Yahweh's vengeance on it

Alternate translation: "go fight a war against the Midianites and punish them for what they did to us"

Numbers 31:4

a thousand

Alternate translation: "1,000" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:5

twelve thousand

Alternate translation: "12,000" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Israel's thousands of men

Alternate translation: "the thousands of Israel's men"

one thousand was provided from each tribe

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: "every tribe sent 1,000 men to war" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

twelve thousand men armed for war

All 12 tribes sent men, including the tribe of Levi. Each tribe sent 1,000 men into battle. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 31:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:8

Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba

These are names of kings of Midian. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Balaam son of Beor

Beor was Balaam's father. See how you translated this in [Numbers 22:5](#).

Numbers 31:9

They took these as plunder

Alternate translation: "They took the Midianites' possessions as their own"

Numbers 31:10

They burned all their cities where they lived and all their camps

Alternate translation: "Israel's army burned all the Midianites' cities where the Midianites lived and all the Midianites' camps"

Numbers 31:11

They took

Alternate translation: "The army of Israel took"

plunder

This refers to the material goods they recovered from killing the Midianite men.

Numbers 31:12

plains

a large area of flat land

Numbers 31:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:14

the commanders of thousands and the captains of hundreds

This could mean: (1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders and captains led. Alternate translation: “the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and the captains of 100 soldiers” or (2) the words translated as “thousands” and “hundreds” do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: “the commanders of large military divisions and the captains of smaller military divisions” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:15

Have you let all the women live?

The law was explicit on who would be permitted to live. The army violated the law by allowing all the women and children to live. This was a rebuke to the army leaders. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 31:16

Look

This word is used here to draw the audience's attention to what is said next. Alternate translation: "Listen" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 31:17

has known a man by lying with him

Alternate translation: "has had sexual relations with a man" (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

Numbers 31:18

General Information:

General Information:

Moses speaks to the commanders of the Israelite army about becoming clean before God.

who have not known a man by lying with him

This refers to girls who were virgins. Alternate translation: “who have not had sexual relations with any man” (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

Numbers 31:19

All of you

Moses is referring to anyone who fought in battle, not just the commanders.

you must purify yourselves

They must become spiritually clean again before entering the camp.

Numbers 31:20

everything made of animal hide and goats' hair, and everything made of wood

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: "everything that someone has made of animal hide, goats' hair, or wood" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 31:21

General Information:

General Information:

Eleazar teaches the soldiers the customs of becoming ceremonially clean before Yahweh after going to war.

Numbers 31:22

gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead

metals that were used during that time period

Numbers 31:23

that resists fire

Alternate translation: "that will not burn"

put it through the fire

Alternate translation: "put it into the fire"

water of cleansing

This refers to water that someone has mixed with ashes from a sin offering. See: [Numbers 19:17-19](#).

Numbers 31:24

then you will become clean

These are the customs of becoming ceremonially clean before Yahweh.

Numbers 31:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:26

Count all the plundered things that were taken

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: "Count all of the possessions that the soldiers took" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

the leaders of the community's ancestor's clans

Alternate translation: "the leaders of each clan"

Numbers 31:27

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:28

Then levy a tax to be given to me from the soldiers who went out to battle

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: "Collect a tax from the soldiers' plunder and give it to me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

every five hundred

Alternate translation: "every 500" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:29

from their half

Alternate translation: "from the soldiers' half"

to be presented to me

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 he will present to me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 31:30

Also from the people of Israel's half

Alternate translation: "Also from the people of Israel's half of the plunder"

who take care

those who oversee and maintain the tabernacle and sacrifices to Yahweh

Numbers 31:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:32

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main teaching. Here Moses begins listing the amount of plunder and how much went to the soldiers, to the people, and to Yahweh.

675,000 sheep

Alternate translation: "six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:33

seventy-two thousand oxen

Alternate translation: "72,000 oxen" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:34

sixty-one thousand donkeys

Alternate translation: "61,000 donkeys" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:35

thirty-two thousand women

Alternate translation: "32,000 women" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

women who had not known a man by lying with him

This refers to women who are virgins. Alternate translation: "women who had not had sexual relations with a man" (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**) (See: **Euphemism (p.1369)**)

Numbers 31:36

General Information:

General Information:

Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the soldiers and the tax that goes to Yahweh. (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)
(See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

The half that was kept for the soldiers

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 soldiers' part of the sheep" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)
(See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

337,000 sheep

Alternate translation: "three hundred and thirty-seven thousand sheep" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:37

was 675

Alternate translation: "was six hundred and seventy-five" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:38

thirty-six thousand

36,000 (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

seventy-two

72 (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:39

General Information:

General Information:

Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the soldiers and the tax that goes to Yahweh. (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)
(See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

were 30,500

Alternate translation: "were thirty thousand five hundred" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

sixty-one

61 (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:40

sixteen thousand

16,000 (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

thirty-two

32 (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:41

to be an offering presented to 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: “to be an offering to Yahweh” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 31:42

General Information:

General Information:

Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the people and the tax that goes to Yahweh. (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)
(See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:43

337,500 sheep

Alternate translation: “three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)
(See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:44

thirty-six thousand oxen

36,000 oxen (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:46

and 16, 000 human lives

You can state this number in words. Alternate translation: “and sixteen thousand human lives” (See: **Numbers (p. 1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

and 16, 000 human lives

It has been stated earlier that all the males and the married women captives were put to death. Alternate translation: “and 16,000 women” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 31:47

General Information:

General Information:

Moses is listing the plunder that goes to the people and the tax that goes to Yahweh. (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)
(See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

General Information:

General Information:

The tax on the people's portion was higher than the tax on the soldiers' portion.

Numbers 31:48

the commanders over thousands and the captains over hundreds

This could mean: (1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders and captains led. Alternate translation: “the commanders over 1,000 soldiers and the captains over 100 soldiers” or (2) the words translated as “thousands” and “hundreds” do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: “the commanders over large military divisions and the captains over smaller military divisions” See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 31:14](#). (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 31:49

Your servants have counted

The commanders refer to themselves as “your servants.” This is a polite way to speak to someone with greater authority.

not one man is missing

This can be stated in a positive statement. “we know for certain that every man is here” (See: **Litotes (p.1396)**) (See: **Litotes (p.1396)**)

Numbers 31:50

General Information:

General Information:

The officers of the army continue speaking to Moses.

armlets and bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and necklaces

These are all types of jewelry that people wore.

to make atonement for ourselves before Yahweh

Alternate translation: "to thank God for saving our lives"

Numbers 31:51

the gold and all the articles of craftsmanship

Alternate translation: "all the articles of gold" or "all the golden jewelry"

Numbers 31:52

All the gold of the offering that they gave to Yahweh—the offerings from the commanders of thousands and from the captains of hundreds—weighed

Alternate translation: "All the gold of the offering that the commanders of thousands and the captains of hundreds gave to Yahweh weighed"

from the commanders of thousands and from the captains of hundreds

This could mean: (1) these numbers represent the exact amount of soldiers that these commanders and captains led. Alternate translation: "from the commanders of 1,000 soldiers and from the captains of 100 soldiers" or (2) the words translated as "thousands" and "hundreds" do not represent exact numbers, but are the names of larger and smaller military divisions. Alternate translation: "from the commanders of large military divisions and from the captains of smaller military divisions" See how you translated a similar phrase in [Numbers 31:14](#). (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

16,750

Alternate translation: "sixteen thousand, seven hundred and fifty" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

shekels

A shekel is 11 grams. (See: **Biblical Money (p.1350)**) (See: **Biblical Money (p.1350)**)

Numbers 31:53

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 31:54

as a reminder of the people of Israel for Yahweh

The gold will remind the people that Yahweh gave them victory. It will also remind Yahweh that the people fulfilled his revenge on the Midianites.

Numbers 32

Numbers 32 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Reuben and Gad's inheritance

Reuben and Gad were given the land conquered east of the Jordan River. This land had good pastures, and suited these tribes because they had many sheep, goats and cattle. They had not yet entered into the Promised Land, and it would have been sinful to not fight with the rest of Israel. So they promised to enter the land to fight with the other tribes, and then return to their own land. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/sin\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/promisedland\]\]](#) and **promise, promised (p.1462)**)

Numbers 32:1

Now

This word is used here to mark a break in the main story line. Here Moses tells background information about the tribes of Reuben and Gad. (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**) (See: **Background Information (p.1344)**)

Numbers 32:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:3

Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:4

General Information:

General Information:

The people from Reuben and Gad continue speaking to Moses, Eleazar, and the other leaders.

the lands that Yahweh attacked before the community of Israel

Yahweh enabling the Israelites to conquer the people who lived in the land is spoken of as if Yahweh went before the Israelites and attacked the people. Alternate translation: “the lands where Yahweh enabled us to defeat the people living there” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

We, your servants

The people of the tribes of Reuben and Gad refer to themselves in this way to show respect to a person of higher authority.

Numbers 32:5

If we have found favor in your eyes

Here, **eyes** are a metonym for sight. Alternate translation: "If we have found favor in your sight" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

If we have found favor in your eyes

Here, **found favor** is an idiom that means be approved of or that the leaders are pleased with them. Alternate translation: "If you are pleased with us" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

If we have found favor in your eyes

Here, for Moses to see with his **eyes** is a metaphor representing his evaluation. Alternate translation: "If we have found favor with you" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

let this land be given to us

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: "give this land to us" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Do not make us cross over the Jordan

They wanted the land on the east side of the Jordan River instead of crossing over to the west side and claiming land there. Alternate translation: "Do not make us cross over the Jordan to take possession of land on that side" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

Numbers 32:6

Should your brothers go to war while you settle down here?

Moses asks this question to rebuke the people from the tribes of Gad and Reuben. Alternate translation: "It is wrong for you to settle down in this land while your brothers go to war." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

Numbers 32:7

Why discourage the hearts & the land that Yahweh has given them?

Moses asks this question to correct the people from the tribes of Gad and Reuben. Alternate translation: “Do not discourage the hearts ... the land that Yahweh has given them.” or “Your actions would discourage the hearts ... the land that Yahweh has given them.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1426)**)

discourage the hearts of the people of Israel from going

Here the word “hearts” represents the people themselves and refers to the seat of their emotions. Alternate translation: “discourage the people of Israel from going” or “cause the people of Israel to not want to go” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 32:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:9

Valley of Eshkol

This is the name of a place. See how you translated this in [Numbers 13:23](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

They saw the land

This refers to seeing what was in the land. Alternate translation: “They saw the strong people and cities in the land” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

discouraged the hearts of the people of Israel

Here the word “hearts” represents the people themselves and refers to the seat of their emotions. See how you translated this in [Numbers 32:7](#). Alternate translation: “discouraged the people of Israel” (See: **Synecdoche (p. 1436)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.1436)**)

Numbers 32:10

And the nose of Yahweh burned

Yahweh becoming angry is spoken of as if his **nose** begins to burn. Alternate translation: "Yahweh became very angry" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 32:11

none of the men

This phrase refers to both men and women. Alternate translation: “none of the people”

twenty years old and up

Alternate translation: “20 years old or older” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

completely followed me

Being devoted to Yahweh and obeying him are spoken of as if they were following Yahweh. Alternate translation: “completely obeyed me” or “been completely devoted to me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 32:12

Jephunneh & Nun

These are names of men. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Kenizzite

This is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:13

And the nose of Yahweh burned against Israel

Yahweh becoming angry is spoken of as if his **nose** begins to burn. Alternate translation: “Yahweh became very angry with Israel” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

forty years

Alternate translation: “40 years” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

all the generation & sight was destroyed

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: “he destroyed all the generation ... sight” or “all the generation ... sight had died” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

who had done evil in his sight

Being in someone’s sight means to be in front of that person where he can see. Alternate translation: “who had done evil before Yahweh” or “who had done evil in Yahweh’s presence” (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 32:14

you have risen up in your fathers' place

The people of Reuben and Gad acting like their ancestors did is spoken of as if they were standing in the place where their ancestors did. Alternate translation: "you have begun to act just like your ancestors" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

to add to Yahweh's burning anger toward Israel

The people causing Yahweh to become angrier is spoken of as if his anger was a fire and the people are adding more fuel to that fire. Alternate translation: "to cause Yahweh to be even more angry with Israel" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 32:15

all this people

Alternate translation: “this entire people” or “all this generation of people”

Numbers 32:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:17

will be ready and armed

Alternate translation: “will be ready with weapons” or “will be ready to fight a war”

in the fortified cities

Alternate translation: “in the secured cities”

Numbers 32:18

General Information:

General Information:

The leaders of Gad and Reuben continue speaking.

has obtained his inheritance

The land that the people were to receive as a permanent possession is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they were to obtain. Alternate translation: “has taken possession of his portion of the land” (See: **Metaphor (p. 1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 32:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:20

if you arm yourselves

Alternate translation: "if you take your weapons"

before Yahweh

This means Yahweh will go with them to battle and enable them to defeat their enemy and take their land.

Alternate translation: "in the presence of Yahweh" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 32:21

until he has driven out his enemies from before him

The pronouns here all refer to Yahweh. Yahweh enabling the Israelites to defeat their enemies is spoken of as if Yahweh were fighting their battles. Alternate translation: “until Yahweh has enabled your soldiers to defeat the enemy and force them away from his presence” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 32:22

and the land is subdued before the face of Yahweh

Here, **land** refers to the people who live there. Alternate translation: “and the people of the land are subdued before the face of Yahweh” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

and the land is subdued before the face 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: “and the Israelites have subdued the people who live in the land before Yahweh” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

you may return

It is implied that they will return to the east side of the Jordan. Alternate translation: “you may return to this land on the east side of the Jordan” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

You will be guiltless toward Yahweh and toward Israel

This could mean: (1) “You will have fulfilled your obligation to Yahweh and to Israel” or (2) “There will be nothing for which Yahweh or the people of Israel can blame you.”

Numbers 32:23

Be sure that your sin will find you out

Moses speaks of sin as if it were a person who will condemn the guilty person. This means that the people cannot escape the punishment that their sin deserves. Alternate translation: "Know for sure that Yahweh will punish you for your sin" (See: **Personification (p.1417)**) (See: **Personification (p.1417)**)

Numbers 32:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:25

Your servants

The people of Gad and Reuben refer to themselves as “your servants.” This is a polite way of speaking to someone with greater authority.

Numbers 32:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:27

will cross over

You can make it clear that they will cross over the Jordan. Alternate translation: “will cross over the Jordan River” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

every man who is armed for war

Alternate translation: “every man prepared for war”

Numbers 32:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:29

every man who is armed

Alternate translation: "every man who is ready with his weapon"

if the land is subdued before you

Here the word "land" refers to the people who live there. 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: "if Yahweh subdues before you the people living in the land" or "if they help you subdue the people living in the land" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 32:30

then they will acquire their possessions among you in the land of Canaan

Alternate translation: "then the descendants of Gad and Reuben will receive land with you in Canaan"

Numbers 32:31

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:32

We will cross over armed

You can make it clear that they will cross the Jordan. Alternate translation: "We will cross over the Jordan ready to fight" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

our possessed inheritance

The land that the people were to receive as a permanent possession is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they were to obtain. Alternate translation: "the portion of land that we will possess" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

will remain with us

This idiom refers to ownership. Alternate translation: "will be ours" (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**) (See: **Idiom (p.1394)**)

Numbers 32:33

Sihon & Og

Sihon and **Og** are names of kings who ruled two separate kingdoms. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)
(See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:34

Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:35

Atroth Shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:36

Beth Nimrah, and Beth Haran

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:37

Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:38

Nebo, Baal Meon & Sibmah

These are names of cities. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

their names were later changed

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “people later changed the names of these cities” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 32:39

Machir

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this name in [Numbers 26:29](#).

Numbers 32:40

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 32:41

Jair

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Havvoth Jair

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 32:42

Nobah

This is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Kenath

This is the name of a city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33

Numbers 33 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter is a summary of Israel's exodus from Egypt to the Promised Land, including their wandering through the desert. The phrase "they set out" means "they left."

Numbers 33:1

by their armed groups

This means that each tribe had their own men, who were armed, to protect them. See how you translated “armed groups” in [Numbers 1:3](#). Alternate translation: “by their military divisions”

Numbers 33:2

as commanded by 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: “as Yahweh commanded” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

departure after departure

Alternate translation: “from one place to another place”

Numbers 33:3

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

on the first month, on day 15 of the first month

Here, **first** is the ordinal number one. (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

on the first month, on day 15 of the first month

This is the first month of the Hebrew calendar. The fifteenth day is near the beginning of April on Western calendars. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

the people of Israel left openly, in the sight of all the Egyptians

Alternate translation: "the Israelites left in plain view of the Egyptians"

Numbers 33:4

their firstborn

This refers to the firstborn sons. Alternate translation: “their firstborn sons” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

he also inflicted punishment on their gods

Yahweh proving that he is more powerful than all of the false gods that the Egyptians worshiped is spoken of as if Yahweh punished those false gods. Alternate translation: “he also proved that he is greater than their gods” (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 33:5

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

set out from

Alternate translation: “departed from”

Numbers 33:6

on the edge of the wilderness

Alternate translation: "on the border of the wilderness"

Numbers 33:7

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:8

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

passed through the middle of the sea

This refers to when Yahweh divided the Red Sea so that the Israelites could escape from the Egyptian army.

Numbers 33:9

twelve springs & seventy palm trees

Alternate translation: "12 springs ... 70 palm trees" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 33:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:11

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:14

where no water was found for the people to drink

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: “where the people could not find water to drink” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 33:15

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:19

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:23

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:27

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:30

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:31

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:33

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:35

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:36

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:37

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:38

in the fortieth year after

Here “fortieth” is the ordinal number for forty. Alternate translation: “40 years after” (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

in the fifth month, on 1 of the month

Here, **fifth** is the ordinal number for five. (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**) (See: **Ordinal Numbers (p.1411)**)

in the fifth month, on 1 of the month

This is the **fifth month** of the Hebrew calendar. The first day is near the middle of July on Western calendars. (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**) (See: **Hebrew Months (p.1380)**)

Numbers 33:39

123 years old

Alternate translation: "one hundred and twenty-three years old" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 33:40

The Canaanite, the king of Arad

Alternate translation: "The Canaanite king of Arad"

Arad

This was the name of a Canaanite city. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

heard of the coming of the people of Israel

Alternate translation: "heard that the people of Israel were coming"

Numbers 33:41

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:42

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:43

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:44

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:45

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:46

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:47

General Information:

General Information:

Moses lists the places the Israelites went after they left Egypt. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 33:48

plains

a large area of flat land

Numbers 33:49

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:50

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:51

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:52

demolish all their high places

Alternate translation: "destroy all of their high places"

Numbers 33:53

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 33:54

inherit the land

The Israelites claiming the land as their permanent possession is spoken of as if they were inheriting the land. (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Wherever the lot falls to each clan, that land will belong to it

Alternate translation: "Each clan will receive the land according to how the lot falls"

Numbers 33:55

like objects in your eyes and thorns in your sides

Just like a small object in a person's eye or a small thorn that sticks into a person skin can cause great irritation, so even a small portion of the Canaanites, if left in the land, would cause great trouble for the Israelites. (See: **Simile (p.1429)**) (See: **Simile (p.1429)**)

Numbers 33:56

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34

Numbers 34 General Notes

Structure and formatting

The ULT sets the lines in 34:19-28 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are long lists.

Special concepts in this chapter

The boundaries

Moses told them all of the land they would inherit and live in and said that they should divide it up by casting lots.
(See: **inherit, inheritance, heir (p.1454)**)

Numbers 34:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:2

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:3

wilderness of Zin

See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 33:12](#).

Numbers 34:4

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:5

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:6

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:7

Mount Hor

See how you translated this name in [Numbers 20:22](#).

Numbers 34:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:13

to the nine tribes and to the half tribe

This means the remaining tribes of Israel who will live on the west side of the Jordan River in the land of Canaan. The tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had already received their land on the east side of the Jordan River.

Numbers 34:14

following the assignment of property to their ancestor's tribe

Alternate translation: "according to how Yahweh assigned the property to their ancestor's tribe"

Numbers 34:15

The two tribes and the half tribe

Alternate translation: "The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and half of the tribe of Manasseh"

Numbers 34:16

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:17

divide the land for your inheritance

Here “your” is plural and refers to the people of Israel. These men will cast lots to divide the land. Then they will distribute it to the tribes. (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**) (See: **Forms of You (p.1375)**)

Numbers 34:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:19

General Information:

General Information:

This is the list of men who will help divide the land among the tribes. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)
(See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 34:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:24

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:25

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:27

General Information:

General Information:

This concludes the list of men who will help divide the land among the tribes. (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 34:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 34:29

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35

Numbers 35 General Notes

Structure and formatting

This chapter continues the material from the previous chapter.

Special concepts in this chapter

Revenge

Yahweh told Moses to establish safe places for people who accidentally killed other people. This prevented revenge killings. Justice is an important concept in this chapter. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/avenge\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/justice\]\]](#))

Numbers 35:1

plains

a large area of flat land

Numbers 35:2

give some of their own shares of land to the Levites

Yahweh did not give the Levites their own land, so they had to live in cities that belonged to other tribes.

pastureland

an area of land where animals feed on grass

Numbers 35:3

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:4

1, 000 cubits

You can state this number in words. Alternate translation: “one thousand cubits” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

1, 000 cubits

If it is necessary to use modern distance units, here is a way of doing it. Alternate translation: “457 meters” (See: **Biblical Distance (p.1347)**) (See: **Biblical Distance (p.1347)**)

Numbers 35:5

2, 000 by the cubit & 2, 000 by the cubit & 2, 000 by the cubit

You can state these numbers in words. Alternate translation: “two thousand cubits ... two thousand cubits ... two thousand cubits” (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

2, 000 by the cubit & 2, 000 by the cubit & 2, 000 by the cubit

You can state this in modern measurements. A cubit is 46 centimeters. Alternate translation: “920 meters ... 920 meters ... 920 meters” (See: **Biblical Distance (p.1347)**) (See: **Biblical Distance (p.1347)**)

Numbers 35:6

a person who has killed someone

This refers to people who have killed someone, but it had not yet been determined whether they killed the person intentionally or accidentally.

forty-two

Alternate translation: "42" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 35:7

forty-eight

Alternate translation: "48" (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**) (See: **Numbers (p.1408)**)

Numbers 35:8

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:9

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:11

unintentionally

accidentally or without wanting to or trying to

Numbers 35:12

the avenger

This refers to a close relative that seeks vengeance by killing the accused man.

so that the accused man will not be killed without first standing trial before the community

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: “so that no one will kill the accused man before the community is able to judge him in court” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 35:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:16

The one who murders shall certainly 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: "You must certainly execute the one who murders another person" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 35:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:18

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:19

The avenger of blood

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for the murder. Alternate translation: "The one who avenges the murder" or "The relative seeking vengeance" (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 35:20

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:22

without premeditated hate

Alternate translation: "without planning it out of hate ahead of time"

without lying in wait

Someone intentionally seeking a way to harm another person is spoken of as if someone were hiding in order to ambush that other person. Alternate translation: "without intentionally having tried to harm the victim" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 35:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:24

the avenger of blood

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for the murder. See how you translated this phrase in [Numbers 35:19](#).

Alternate translation: "the one who avenges the murder" or "the relative seeking vengeance" (See: **Metonymy** (p. 1406)) (See: **Metonymy** (p.1406))

Numbers 35:25

The community must rescue the accused

This means if the community judges that the death was accidental then they must save the accused man from the relative who wants to kill him. If the community judges that the death was not accidental, then the relative must execute the accused man. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

the one who was anointed with the holy oil

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 one you anointed with holy oil" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 35:26

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:27

the avenger of blood

Here the word "blood" is a metonym for the murder. See how you translated these words in [Numbers 35:19](#).

Alternate translation: "the one who avenges the murder" or "the relative seeking vengeance" (See: **Metonymy** (p. 1406)) (See: **Metonymy** (p.1406))

Numbers 35:28

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 35:29

through all your people's generations

Alternate translation: "and all of your descendants who will live after you"

Numbers 35:30

the murderer must be killed

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: “someone must execute the murderer” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

as testified to by the words of witnesses

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: “according to the testimony of witnesses” or “as witnesses testify to the murder” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

But one witness' word alone may not cause any person to be put to death

The testimony of one witness is not enough to execute a person for murder. 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: “But the word of only one witness is not enough for you to execute a person” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 35:31

he shall certainly 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: “you must execute him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 35:32

You must not & allow him to reside on his own property

This implied that the man would have left the city of refuge and returned home. Alternate translation: “You must not ... allow him to leave the city of refuge and return home to live on his own property” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

in this way

Alternate translation: “by accepting a ransom”

Numbers 35:33

Do not pollute in this way the land where you live, because blood from murder pollutes the land

Making the land unacceptable to Yahweh is spoken of as if it were physically polluting the land. Alternate translation: "Do not make the land where you live unacceptable to me in this way, because blood from murder makes the land unacceptable to me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

in this way

This means by disobeying the laws concerning a person who kills someone.

No atonement can be made for the land when blood has been shed on it, except by the blood of the one who shed it

This refers to when a person intentionally kills another person. 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: "When someone has shed blood in the land, only the execution of the murderer can make atonement for the land" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 35:34

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 36

Numbers 36 General Notes

Structure and formatting

Female heirs

Women who inherited land from their father must marry men from their tribe so the inheritance does not leave the tribe. (See: **inherit, inheritance, heir (p.1454)**)

Numbers 36:1

Machir

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this man's name in [Numbers 26:29](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 36:2

You were commanded by 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 commanded you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Zelophehad

This is the name of a man. See how you translated this man’s name in [Numbers 26:33](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 36:3

will be removed from our ancestor's share

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: "will no longer belong to our ancestor's share" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

It will be added

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: "It will belong to" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

it will be removed from the assigned share of our inheritance

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: "it will no longer be a part of our inheritance" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 36:4

the year of Jubilee of the people

This refers to a celebration which happens once every fifty years. In this celebration, all land that someone sold or traded must return to the original owner. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1340)**)

their share will be joined

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: “their share will belong” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

their share will be taken away from the share of our ancestors' tribe

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “they will take our tribe's share of the land” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 36:5

at Yahweh's word

Alternate translation: "according to what Yahweh said"

Numbers 36:6

Let them be married to whom they think best

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: "Let them marry whom they want" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

they must marry only within the family of their father's tribe

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: "but they may only marry someone from their father's tribe" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.1337)**)

Numbers 36:7

No share

The word “share” represents the portion of land that each tribe received as an inheritance. Alternate translation: “No portion of the land” (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.1406)**)

Numbers 36:8

who owns a share in her tribe

Alternate translation: "who owns a share of land in her tribe"

may own an inheritance

The land that each clan possesses is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received. (See: **Metaphor (p. 1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 36:9

No share may change hands from one tribe to another

Transferring ownership from one tribe to another is spoken of as if the property passed from one person's hands to another person's hands. Alternate translation: "No one may transfer the ownership of any share of land from one tribe to another" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 36:10

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Numbers 36:11

Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milkah, and Noah

See how you translated these women's names in [Numbers 26:33](#). (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1383)**)

Numbers 36:12

their inheritances

The land that each of Zelophehad's daughters possessed is spoken of as if it were an inheritance that they received. Alternate translation: "the lands that they received as an inheritance" (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.1400)**)

Numbers 36:13

plains

a large area of flat land



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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: Numbers 3:38; Numbers 3:46; Numbers 3:49; Numbers 4:12; Numbers 4:14; Numbers 4:16; Numbers 4:28; Numbers 4:33; Numbers 6:5; Numbers 6:13; Numbers 6:18; Numbers 6:19; Numbers 6:21; Numbers 7:2; Numbers 8:22; Numbers 9:18; Numbers 9:23; Numbers 10:10; Numbers 14:9; Numbers 14:18; Numbers 14:27; Numbers 17:5; Numbers 17:10; Numbers 22:7; Numbers 24:16; Numbers 24:24; Numbers 25:18; Numbers 28:22; Numbers 28:30; Numbers 29:5; Numbers 29:11

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.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Abstract Nouns ([UTA PDF](#))
Word Order ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: Numbers 1:16; Numbers 1:17; Numbers 1:20; Numbers 1:22; Numbers 1:24; Numbers 1:26; Numbers 1:28; Numbers 1:30; Numbers 1:32; Numbers 1:34; Numbers 1:36; Numbers 1:38; Numbers 1:40; Numbers 1:42; Numbers 1:45; Numbers 1:47; Numbers 1:51; Numbers 2:32; Numbers 3:3; Numbers 3:9; Numbers 3:10; Numbers 3:22; Numbers 3:28; Numbers 3:31; Numbers 3:34; Numbers 3:38; Numbers 4:4; Numbers 4:18; Numbers 4:26; Numbers 4:38; Numbers 4:40; Numbers 4:42; Numbers 4:44; Numbers 4:49; Numbers 5:8; Numbers 5:9; Numbers 5:14; Numbers 5:21; Numbers 5:23; Numbers 5:27; Numbers 5:28; Numbers 5:29; Numbers 6:3; Numbers 6:4; Numbers 6:5; Numbers 6:7; Numbers 6:8; Numbers 6:12; Numbers 6:13; Numbers 6:15; Numbers 6:19; Numbers 6:20; Numbers 6:21; Numbers 7:13; Numbers 7:19; Numbers 7:25; Numbers 7:31; Numbers 7:37; Numbers 7:43; Numbers 7:49; Numbers 7:55; Numbers 7:61; Numbers 7:67; Numbers 7:73; Numbers 7:79; Numbers 7:88; Numbers 8:4; Numbers 8:8; Numbers 9:13; Numbers 9:15; Numbers 9:17; Numbers 9:22; Numbers 9:23; Numbers 10:11; Numbers 10:13; Numbers 11:3; Numbers 11:26; Numbers 12:15; Numbers 13:22; Numbers 13:24; Numbers 14:6; Numbers 14:9; Numbers 14:21; Numbers 14:29; Numbers 14:42; Numbers 15:10; Numbers 15:11; Numbers 15:12; Numbers 15:13; Numbers 15:14; Numbers 15:19; Numbers 15:24; Numbers 15:25; Numbers 15:26; Numbers 15:28; Numbers 15:30; Numbers 15:34; Numbers 15:35; Numbers 16:5; Numbers 16:7; Numbers 16:26; Numbers 16:38; Numbers 16:39; Numbers 16:48; Numbers 17:6; Numbers 18:1; Numbers 18:6; Numbers 18:7; Numbers 18:9; Numbers 18:16; Numbers 18:17; Numbers 18:18; Numbers 18:27; Numbers 18:29; Numbers 19:9; Numbers 19:13; Numbers 19:16; Numbers 19:20; Numbers 20:1; Numbers 20:13; Numbers 21:3; Numbers 21:8; Numbers 21:27; Numbers 21:30; Numbers 21:35; Numbers 22:6; Numbers 22:12; Numbers 23:20; Numbers 23:23; Numbers 24:3; Numbers 24:7; Numbers 24:9; Numbers 24:18; Numbers 24:22; Numbers 25:14; Numbers 25:18; Numbers 26:37; Numbers 26:53; Numbers 26:54; Numbers 26:55; Numbers 26:56; Numbers 26:57; Numbers 26:62; Numbers 26:63; Numbers 26:64; Numbers 27:11; Numbers 28:2; Numbers 28:3; Numbers 28:5; Numbers 28:6; Numbers 28:8; Numbers 28:9; Numbers 28:12; Numbers 28:13; Numbers 28:15; Numbers 28:17; Numbers 28:19; Numbers 28:20; Numbers 28:23; Numbers 28:24; Numbers 28:28; Numbers 28:29; Numbers 29:3; Numbers 29:6; Numbers 29:9; Numbers 29:13; Numbers 29:14; Numbers 29:18; Numbers 29:21; Numbers 29:24; Numbers 29:27; Numbers 29:30; Numbers 29:33; Numbers 29:36; Numbers 29:37; Numbers 30:9; Numbers 31:5; Numbers 31:20; Numbers 31:26; Numbers 31:28; Numbers 31:29; Numbers 31:36; Numbers 31:41; Numbers 32:5; Numbers 32:13; Numbers 32:22; Numbers 32:29; Numbers 32:38; Numbers 33:2; Numbers 33:14; Numbers 35:12; Numbers 35:16; Numbers 35:25; Numbers 35:30; Numbers 35:31; Numbers 35:33; Numbers 36:2; Numbers 36:3; Numbers 36:4; Numbers 36:6

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: Numbers 1:2; Numbers 1:50; Numbers 1:54; Numbers 2:9; Numbers 2:16; Numbers 2:24; Numbers 2:25; Numbers 2:31; Numbers 2:34; Numbers 3:10; Numbers 3:15; Numbers 3:38; Numbers 3:41; Numbers 3:47; Numbers 4:6; Numbers 4:7; Numbers 4:8; Numbers 4:11; Numbers 4:14; Numbers 4:18; Numbers 4:22; Numbers 4:25; Numbers 4:29; Numbers 4:34; Numbers 4:35; Numbers 4:38; Numbers 4:39; Numbers 4:43; Numbers 4:47; Numbers 5:4; Numbers 5:6; Numbers 5:8; Numbers 5:12; Numbers 5:13; Numbers 5:16; Numbers 5:27; Numbers 5:28; Numbers 6:12; Numbers 6:14; Numbers 6:15; Numbers 6:20; Numbers 6:21; Numbers 7:3; Numbers 7:9; Numbers 8:15; Numbers 9:2; Numbers 9:3; Numbers 9:6; Numbers 9:7; Numbers 9:10; Numbers 9:16; Numbers 9:21; Numbers 10:33; Numbers 10:36; Numbers 11:29; Numbers 13:11; Numbers 14:35; Numbers 14:37; Numbers 15:15; Numbers 15:39; Numbers 18:7; Numbers 18:16; Numbers 18:17; Numbers 20:12; Numbers 21:8; Numbers 21:18; Numbers 22:23; Numbers 22:31; Numbers 23:4; Numbers 23:10; Numbers 23:28; Numbers 24:19; Numbers 25:4; Numbers 25:6; Numbers 26:2; Numbers 26:37; Numbers 26:54; Numbers 26:62; Numbers 27:3; Numbers 27:4;

Numbers 27:7; Numbers 27:14; Numbers 28:7; Numbers 28:9; Numbers 28:18; Numbers 30:5; Numbers 30:10;
Numbers 30:15; Numbers 31:5; Numbers 31:46; Numbers 32:5; Numbers 32:9; Numbers 32:22; Numbers 32:27;
Numbers 32:32; Numbers 33:4; Numbers 35:25; Numbers 35:32; Numbers 36:4

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: [Numbers 12:3](#); [Numbers 22:4](#); [Numbers 25:14](#); [Numbers 32:1](#)

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 handspace was the width of a man's hand with the fingers spread out.
- The **cubit** was the length of a man's forearm, from the elbow to the tip of the longest finger.
- The **"long" cubit** is used only in Ezekiel 40-48. It is the length of a normal cubit plus a span.
- The **stadium** (plural, **stadia**) referred to a certain footrace that was about 185 meters in length. Some older English versions translated this word as "furlong," which referred to the average length of a plowed field.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the lengths and distances that are in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-decimal\]\]](#)
Fractions ([UTA PDF](#))

The metric values in the table below are close but not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures probably differed in exact length from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are an attempt to give an average measurement.

Original Measure	Metric Measure
handbreadth	8 centimeters
span	23 centimeters
cubit	46 centimeters
"long" cubit	54 centimeters
stadia	185 meters

Translation Principles

The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.

Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.

Whatever measure you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kind of measure in the text or a footnote.

If you do not use the Biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one cubit as ".46 meters" or even as "46 centimeters," readers might think that the measurement is exact. It would be better to say "half a meter," "45 centimeters," or "50 centimeters."

Sometimes it can be helpful to use the word "about" to show that a measurement is not exact. For example, Luke 24:13 says that Emmaus was 60 stadia from Jerusalem. This can be translated as "about ten kilometers" from Jerusalem.

When God tells people how long something should be, and when people make things according to those lengths, do not use "about" in the translation. Otherwise it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how long something should be.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)
- (2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Exodus 25:10 below.

They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be two and a half cubits; its width will be one cubit and a half; and its height will be one cubit and a half. (Exodus 25:10 ULT)

- (1) Use the measurements given in the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half kubits**; its width will be **one kubit and a half**; and its height will be **one kubit and a half**."

- (2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement. For example, if you measure things using the standard meter length, you could translate it as below.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The following shows both measurements in the text.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **two and a half cubits (one meter)**; its width will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**; and its height will be **one cubit and a half (two thirds of a meter)**."

- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULT measurements in notes.

"They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; ¹ its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; ² and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**."

The footnotes would look like:

“They are to make an ark of acacia wood. Its length must be **one meter**; ¹ its width will be **two thirds of a meter**; ² and its height will be **two thirds of a meter**.”

The footnotes would look like:

^[1] two and a half cubits ^[2] one cubit and a half

”

Referenced in: [Numbers 11:31](#); [Numbers 35:4](#); [Numbers 35:5](#)

Biblical Money

Description

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the values of money in the Bible?*

In early Old Testament times, people weighed their metals, such as silver and gold, and would pay a certain weight of that metal in order to buy things. Later, people started to make coins that each contained a standard amount of a certain metal. The daric is one such coin. In New Testament times, people used silver and copper coins.

The two tables below show some of the most well-known units of money found in the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT). The table for Old Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it weighed. The table for New Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it was worth in terms of a day's wage.

Unit in OT	Metal	Weight
daric	gold coin	8.4 grams
shekel	various metals	11 grams
talent	various metals	33 kilograms

Unit in NT	Metal	Day's Wage
denarius/denarii	silver coin	1 day
drachma	silver coin	1 day
mite	copper coin	1/64 day
shekel	silver coin	4 days
talent	silver	6,000 days

Translation Principle

Do not use modern money values since these change from year to year. Using them will cause the Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate.

Translation Strategies

The value of most money in the Old Testament was based on its weight. So when translating these weights in the Old Testament, see [Biblical Weight](#). The strategies below are for translating the value of money in the New Testament.

- (1) Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)
- (2) Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many coins were used.
- (3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.
- (4) Use the biblical term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.
- (5) Use the biblical term and explain it in a footnote.

Translation Strategies Applied

The translations strategies are all applied to Luke 7:41 below.

1 The one owed 500 denarii, and the other, 50. (Luke 7:41b ULT)

Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)

1 "The one owed **500 denali**, and the other, **50**."

Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many pieces or coins were used.

1 "The one owed **500 silver coins**, and the other, **50**."

(3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.

1 "The one owed **500 days' wages**, and the other, **50**."

(4) Use the Bible term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.

1 "The one owed **500 denarii** 1, and the other owed **50 denarii**. 2"

The footnotes would look like:

1 [1] 500 days' wages [2] 50 days' wages

(5) Use the Bible term and explain it in a footnote.

1 "The one owed **500 denarii**,¹ and the other, **50**." (Luke 7:41 ULT)

[1] A denarius was the amount of silver that people could earn in one day of work.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Copy or Borrow Words \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Translate Unknowns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Numbers 3:47](#); [Numbers 31:52](#)

Biblical Volume

Description

The following terms are the most common units of volume used in the Bible to state how much a certain container could hold. The containers and measurements are given for both liquids (such as wine) and dry solids (such as grain). The metric values are not exactly equal to the biblical measures. The biblical measures probably differed in exact amount from time to time and place to place. The equivalents below are an attempt to give an average measurement.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the measures of volume that are in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[\[\[rc://en/ta/man/translate/translate-decimal\]\]](#)

Type	Original Measure	Liters
Dry	omer	2 liters
Dry	ephah	22 liters
Dry	homer	220 liters
Dry	cor	220 liters
Dry	seah	7.7 liters
Dry	lethek	114.8 liters
Liquid	metrete	40 liters
Liquid	bath	22 liters
Liquid	hin	3.7 liters
Liquid	kab	1.23 liters
Liquid	log	0.31 liters

Translation Principles

- The people in the Bible did not use modern measures such as meters, liters, and kilograms. Using the original measures can help readers know that the Bible really was written long ago in a time when people used those measures.
- Using modern measures can help readers understand the text more easily.
- Whatever measures you use, it would be good, if possible, to tell about the other kinds of measures in the text or a footnote.
- If you do not use the biblical measures, try not to give the readers the idea that the measurements are exact. For example, if you translate one hin as “3.7 liters,” readers might think that the measurement is exactly 3.7 liters, not 3.6 or 3.8. It would be better to use a more approximate measure such as “three and a half liters” or “four liters.”
- When God tells people how much of something to use, and when people use those amounts in obedience to him, do not say “about” in the translation. Otherwise it will give the impression that God did not care exactly how much they used.

When the unit of measure is stated

Translation Strategies

- (1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)
- (2) Use the metric measurements given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.
- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.
- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note.
- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Isaiah 5:10 below.

For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only one bath, and one homer of seed will yield only an ephah. (Isaiah 5:10 ULT)

- (1) Use the measurements from the ULT. These are the same kinds of measurements that the original writers used. Spell them in a way that is similar to the way they sound or are spelled in the ULT. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)

"For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only one **bat**, and one **homer** of seed will yield only an **efa**."

- (2) Use the measurements given in the UST. Usually they are metric measurements. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

"For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **22 liters** and **220 liters** of seed will yield only **22 liters**."

"For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **22**, and **ten baskets** of seed will yield only **one basket**."

- (3) Use measurements that are already used in your language. In order to do this you would need to know how your measurements relate to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

"For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **six gallons**, and **six and a half bushels** of seed will yield only **20 quarts**."

- (4) Use the measurements from the ULT and include measurements that your people know in the text or a note. The following shows both measurements in the text.

"For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only **one bath (six gallons)**, and **one homer (six and a half bushels)** of seed will yield only **an ephah (20 quarts)**."

- (5) Use measurements that your people know, and include the measurements from the ULT in the text or in a note. The following shows the ULT measurements in footnotes.

"For a ten-yoke vineyard will yield only 22 liters¹, and 220 liters² of seed will yield only 22 liters³."

The footnotes would look like:

[1] one bath [2] one homer [3] one ephah

When the unit of measure is implied

Sometimes the Hebrew does not specify a particular unit of volume but only uses a number. In these cases, many English versions, including the ULT and UST, add the word “measure.”

When you came to a heap of **20 measures** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 measures** of wine, there were only 20. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) Translate literally by using the number without a unit.
- (2) Use a generic word like “measure” or “quantity” or “amount.”
- (3) Use the name of an appropriate container, such as “basket” for grain or “jar” for wine.
- (4) Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

Translation Strategies Applied

The strategies are all applied to Haggai 2:16 below.

When you came to a heap of **20 measures** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **fifty measures** of wine, there were only **20**. (Haggai 2:16 ULT)

- (1) Translate literally by using the number without a unit.

When you came to a heap of **20** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50** of wine, there were only **20**.

- (2) Use a generic word like “measure” or “quantity” or “amount.”

When you came to a heap of **20 amounts** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **fifty amounts** of wine, there were only **20**.

- (3) Use the name of an appropriate container, such as “basket” for grain or “jar” for wine.

When you came to a heap of **20 baskets** of grain, there were only **ten**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 jars** of wine, there were only **20**.

- (4) Use a unit of measure that you are already using in your translation.

When you came to a heap for **20 liters** of grain, there were only **ten liters**, and when you came to the wine vat to draw out **50 liters** of wine, there were only **20 liters**.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Fractions ([UTA PDF](#))

Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Numbers 5:15](#); [Numbers 11:32](#); [Numbers 15:4](#); [Numbers 15:6](#); [Numbers 15:9](#); [Numbers 28:5](#); [Numbers 28:7](#); [Numbers 28:12](#); [Numbers 28:13](#); [Numbers 28:14](#); [Numbers 28:20](#); [Numbers 28:21](#); [Numbers 28:28](#); [Numbers 28:29](#); [Numbers 29:3](#); [Numbers 29:4](#); [Numbers 29:9](#); [Numbers 29:10](#); [Numbers 29:14](#); [Numbers 29:15](#)

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: [Numbers 3:47](#); [Numbers 3:50](#); [Numbers 7:13](#); [Numbers 7:14](#); [Numbers 7:19](#); [Numbers 7:20](#); [Numbers 7:25](#); [Numbers 7:26](#); [Numbers 7:31](#); [Numbers 7:32](#); [Numbers 7:37](#); [Numbers 7:38](#); [Numbers 7:43](#); [Numbers 7:44](#); [Numbers 7:49](#); [Numbers 7:50](#); [Numbers 7:55](#); [Numbers 7:56](#); [Numbers 7:61](#); [Numbers 7:62](#); [Numbers 7:67](#); [Numbers 7:68](#); [Numbers 7:73](#); [Numbers 7:74](#); [Numbers 7:79](#); [Numbers 7:80](#); [Numbers 7:85](#); [Numbers 7:86](#); [Numbers 18:16](#)

Copy or Borrow Words

Description

Sometimes the Bible includes things that are not part of your culture and for which your language may not have a word. The Bible also includes people and places for which you may not have names.

When that happens you can “borrow” the word from the Bible in a familiar language and use it in your translation in your own language. This means that you basically copy it from the other language. This page tells how to “borrow” words. (There are also other ways to translate words for things that are not in your language. See [Translate Unknowns](#).)

This page answers the question: *What does it mean to borrow words from another language and how can I do it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Translate Unknowns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Examples From the Bible

Seeing one fig tree along the roadside, he went to it. (Matthew 21:19a ULT)

If there are no fig trees where your language is spoken, there might not be a name for this kind of tree in your language.

Above him were the **seraphim**; each one had six wings; with two each covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. (Isaiah 6:2 ULT)

Your language might not have a name for this kind of creature.

The declaration of the word of Yahweh to Israel by the hand of **Malachi**. (Malachi 1:1 ULT)

Malachi might not be a name that people who speak your language use.

Translation Strategies

There are several things to be aware of when borrowing words from another language.

- Different languages use different scripts, such as the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Cyrillic, Devanagari, and Korean scripts. These scripts use different shapes to represent the letters in their alphabets.
- Languages that use the same script might pronounce the letters in that script differently. For example, when speaking German, people pronounce the letter “j” the same way that people pronounce the letter “y” when speaking English.
- Languages do not all have the same sounds or combinations of sounds. For example, many languages do not have the soft “th” sound in the English word “think,” and some languages cannot start a word with a combination of sounds like “st” as in “stop.”

There are several ways to borrow a word.

- (1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.
- (2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.
- (3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If your language uses a different script from the language you are translating from, you can simply substitute each letter shape with the corresponding letter shape of the script of your language.

.A man's name in Hebrew letters — זְפַנְיָהּ
"Zephaniah" — The same name in Roman letters

(2) You can spell the word as the Other Language spells it, and pronounce it the way your language normally pronounces those letters.

Zephaniah — This is a man's name.
"Zephaniah" — The name as it is spelled in English, but you can pronounce it according to the rules of your language.

(3) You can pronounce the word similarly to the way the Other Language does, and adjust the spelling to fit the rules of your language.

Zephaniah — If your language does not have the "z," you could use "s." If your writing system does not use "ph" you could use "f." Depending on how you pronounce the "i" you could spell it with "i" or "ai" or "ay."
"Sefania"
"Sefanaia"
"Sefanaya"

"

Referenced in: [Numbers 13:21](#); [Numbers 20:1](#)

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker's exact words. In the example below, John would have said "I" when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John's words, uses the word "I" in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John's exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: "".

- John said, "I do not know at what time I will arrive."

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

- John said that he did not know at what time he would arrive.

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](#))

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!**'

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: [Numbers 21:16](#)

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.

...ἰῶτα ἐν ἡ 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: [Numbers 11:32](#); [Numbers 19:12](#); [Numbers 19:15](#); [Numbers 26:65](#)

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: [Numbers 11:22](#); [Numbers 19:2](#); [Numbers 20:22](#); [Numbers 21:27](#); [Numbers 30:4](#); [Numbers 30:5](#)

Ellipsis

Description

An ellipsis¹ occurs when a speaker or writer leaves out one or more words that normally should be in the sentence. The speaker or writer does this because he knows that the hearer or reader will understand the meaning of the sentence and supply the words in his mind when he hears or reads the words that are there. For example:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, **nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous.**
(Psalm 1:5 ULT)

There is ellipsis in the second part because “nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous” is not a complete sentence. The speaker assumes that the hearer will understand what it is that sinners will not do in the assembly of the righteous by filling in the action from the previous clause. With the action filled in, the complete sentence would read:

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **will** sinners **stand** in the assembly of the righteous.

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)

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](#))

The information that the reader must understand in the second parts of these sentences can be filled in from the first parts:

Watch carefully, therefore, how you walk—**walk** not as unwise but **walk** as wise,

Absolute Ellipsis

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight.**” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

It seems that the man answered in an incomplete sentence because he wanted to be polite and not directly ask Jesus for healing. He knew that Jesus would understand that the only way he could receive his sight would be for Jesus to heal him. The complete sentence would be:

“Lord, **I want you to heal me so** that I might receive my sight.”

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior. (Titus 1:4 ULT)

The writer assumes that the reader will recognize this common form of a blessing or wish, so he does not need to include the full sentence, which would be:

To Titus, a true son in our common faith. **May you receive** grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.

Translation Strategies

If ellipsis would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add the missing words to the incomplete phrase or sentence.

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor **sinner in the assembly** of the righteous. (Psalm 1:5 ULT)

So the wicked will not stand in the judgment, and **sinner will not stand in the assembly** of the righteous.

Then when he had come near, he asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” And so he said, “Lord, **that I might recover my sight.**” (Luke 18:40b-41 ULT)

Then when the man was near, Jesus asked him, “What do you want me to do for you?” He said, “Lord, **I want you to heal me** that I might receive my sight.”

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf **and Sirion like a young ox.** (Psalm 29:6 ULT)

He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and **he makes** Sirion **skip** like a young ox.

English has a punctuation symbol which is also called an ellipsis. It is a series of three dots (...) used to indicate an intentional omission of a word, phrase, sentence or more from text without altering its original meaning. This translationAcademy article is not about the punctuation mark, but about the concept of omission of words that normally should be in the sentence. ↩

"

Referenced in: Numbers 2:8; Numbers 2:11; Numbers 2:13; Numbers 2:15; Numbers 2:19; Numbers 2:21; Numbers 2:23; Numbers 2:26; Numbers 2:28; Numbers 2:30; Numbers 4:40; Numbers 6:3; Numbers 6:17; Numbers 8:7; Numbers 8:18; Numbers 27:13; Numbers 27:23; Numbers 28:9; Numbers 28:12; Numbers 28:13; Numbers 28:20; Numbers 28:21; Numbers 28:28; Numbers 29:3; Numbers 29:4; Numbers 29:9; Numbers 29:10; Numbers 29:14; Numbers 29:15; Numbers 30:7; Numbers 30:14

Euphemism

Description

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable, such as death or activities usually done in private.

This page answers the question: *What is a euphemism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

... they found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa.
(1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

This means that Saul and his sons “were dead.” It is a euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages use different euphemisms. If the target language does not use the same euphemism as in the source language, readers may not understand what it means and they may think that the writer means only what the words literally say.

Examples From the Bible

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so **he did not say specifically** what Saul did or what he left in the cave.

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

In order **to be polite**, Mary uses a euphemism to say that she has never had sexual intercourse with a man.

Translation Strategies

If euphemism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.
- (2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT) — Some languages might use euphemisms like these:

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **dig a hole**”

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **have some time alone**”

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not **slept with a man?**"

(2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

They found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

"They found Saul and his sons **dead** on Mount Gilboa."

"

Referenced in: [Numbers 5:13](#); [Numbers 5:19](#); [Numbers 5:21](#); [Numbers 5:27](#); [Numbers 8:17](#); [Numbers 20:24](#); [Numbers 20:26](#); [Numbers 27:13](#); [Numbers 31:2](#); [Numbers 31:17](#); [Numbers 31:18](#); [Numbers 31:35](#)

Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Description

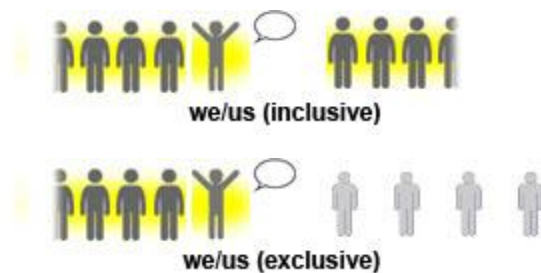
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also true for "us," "our," "ours," and "ourselves." Some languages have inclusive forms and exclusive forms for each of these. Translators whose language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms for these words will need to understand what the speaker meant so that they can decide which form to use.

This page answers the question: *What are the exclusive and inclusive forms of "we"?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

See the pictures. The people on the right are the people that the speaker is talking to. The yellow highlight shows who the inclusive "we" and the exclusive "we" refer to.



Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. Like English, these languages do not have separate exclusive and inclusive forms for "we." If your language has separate exclusive and inclusive forms of "we," then you will need to understand what the speaker meant so that you can decide which form of "we" to use.

Examples From the Bible

Exclusive

They said, "There are not more than five loaves of bread and two fish with us—unless **we** go and buy food for all these people." (Luke 9:13 ULT)

In the second clause, the disciples are talking about some of them going to buy food. They were speaking to Jesus, but Jesus was not going to buy food. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" would use the **exclusive** form there.

We have seen it, and **we** bear witness to it. **We** are announcing to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and which has been made known to **us**. (1 John 1:2 ULT)

John is telling people who have not seen Jesus what he and the other apostles have seen. So languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **exclusive** forms in this verse.

Inclusive

The shepherds said one to each other, "Let **us** now go to Bethlehem, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to **us**." (Luke 2:15b ULT)

The shepherds were speaking to one another. When they said "us," they were including the people they were speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

Now it happened that on one of those days, he indeed got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, "Let **us** go over to the other side of the lake." So they set sail. (Luke 8:22 ULT)

When Jesus said "us," he was referring to himself and to the disciples he was speaking to, so languages that have inclusive and exclusive forms of "we" and "us" would use the **inclusive** form in this verse.

Next we recommend you learn about:

When Masculine Words Include Women ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Numbers 20:10](#); [Numbers 21:7](#)

First, Second or Third Person

Normally a speaker refers to himself as “I” and the person he is speaking to as “you.” Sometimes in the Bible a speaker refers to himself or to the person he is speaking to with terms other than “I” or “you.”

Description

- First person — This is how a speaker normally refers to himself. English uses the pronouns “I” and “we.” (Also: me, my, mine; us, our, ours)
- Second person — This is how a speaker normally refers to the person or people he is speaking to. English uses the pronoun “you.” (Also: your, yours)
- Third person — This is how a speaker refers to someone else. English uses the pronouns “he,” “she,” “it,” and “they.” (Also: him, his, her, hers, its; them, their, theirs) Noun phrases like “the man” or “the woman” are also third person.

This page answers the question: *What are first, second, and third person, and how do I translate when a third person form does not refer to the third person?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit ([UTA PDF](#))

Pronouns ([UTA PDF](#))

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Sometimes in the Bible a speaker uses the third person to refer to himself or to the people he is speaking to. Readers might think that the speaker was referring to someone else. They might not understand that he meant “I” or “you.”

Examples From the Bible

Sometimes people used the third person instead of “I” or “me” to refer to themselves.

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34 ULT)

David referred to himself in the third person as “your servant” and used “his.” He was calling himself Saul’s servant in order to show his humility before Saul.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

God referred to himself in the third person with the words “God’s” and “his.” He did this to emphasize that he is God, and he is powerful.

Sometimes people use the third person instead of “you” or “your” to refer to the person or people they are speaking to.

Abraham answered and said, “Look, I have undertaken to speak to my Lord, even though I am only dust and ashes!” (Genesis 18:27 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to the Lord, and referred to the Lord as “My Lord” rather than as “you.” He did this to show his humility before God.

So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

After saying “each of you,” Jesus used the third person “his” instead of “your.”

Translation Strategies

If using the third person to mean “I” or “you” would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”
- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the third person phrase along with the pronoun “I” or “you.”

But David said to Saul, “**Your servant** used to keep **his** father’s sheep.” (1 Samuel 17:34)

But David said to Saul, “**I, your servant**, used to keep **my** father’s sheep.”

- (2) Simply use the first person (“I”) or second person (“you”) instead of the third person.

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **God’s**? Can you thunder with a voice like **his**?” (Job 40:6, 9 ULT)

Then Yahweh answered Job out of a fierce storm and said, “... Do you have an arm like **mine**? Can you thunder with a voice like **mine**?”

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **his** brother from your heart. (Matthew 18:35 ULT)

So also my heavenly Father will do to you if **each of you** does not forgive **your** brother from your heart.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Forms of You ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Numbers 11:11](#); [Numbers 24:4](#); [Numbers 24:20](#)

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. For help with translating these, we suggest you read:

- [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 or she 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](#)

Masculine and Feminine

Some languages have a **masculine** form and a **feminine** form of the word for “you.” People use the **masculine** form when speaking to a man or boy and the **feminine** form when speaking to a woman or girl.

English does not make any of the above distinctions, so they are absent in the ULT. Please be aware of this and use the appropriate forms of “you” if your language does make any of these distinctions.

”

Referenced in: [Numbers 5:3](#); [Numbers 6:23](#); [Numbers 6:24](#); [Numbers 6:25](#); [Numbers 6:26](#); [Numbers 9:14](#); [Numbers 10:5](#); [Numbers 10:6](#); [Numbers 10:8](#); [Numbers 10:10](#); [Numbers 14:12](#); [Numbers 18:3](#); [Numbers 18:4](#); [Numbers 18:5](#); [Numbers 18:7](#); [Numbers 20:18](#); [Numbers 34:17](#)

Fractions

Description

A fraction is a number that represents part of a whole. When an item is divided into several equal parts, a fraction refers to one or more of those parts.

For the drink offering, you must offer **a third** of a hin of wine. (Numbers 15:7a ULT)

A hin is a container of a set size which is used for measuring wine and other liquids. The people were to think about dividing a hin container into three equal parts, filling up only one of those parts and offering that amount.

... **a third** of the ships were destroyed. (Revelation 8:9b ULT)

There were many ships. If all those ships were divided into three equal groups of ships, one group of ships was destroyed.

Most fractions in English simply have the letters “th” added to the end of the number, such as fourth, sixth, ninth, tenth.

| Number of parts the whole is divided into | Fraction | | ----- | ----- | | four | fourth | | ten | tenth | | one hundred | one hundredth | | one thousand | one thousandth |

Some fractions in English do not follow that pattern.

| Number of parts the whole is divided into | Fraction | | ----- | ----- | | two | half | | three | third | | five | fifth |

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use fractions. They may simply talk about parts or groups, but they do not use fractions to tell how big a part is or how many parts are included in a group.

Examples From the Bible

Now to the **half-tribe** of Manasseh, Moses had given a possession in Bashan, but to the other **half**, Joshua gave a possession among their brothers across the Jordan on the west. (Joshua 22:7 ULT)

The tribe of Manasseh divided into two groups. The phrase “the half-tribe of Manasseh” refers one of those groups. The phrase “the other half” refers to the other group.

So the four angels who had been prepared for that hour, that day, that month, and that year, were released so that they would kill **a third** of mankind. (Revelation 9:15 ULT)

If all the people in the world were to be divided into three equal groups, then the number of people in one group would be killed.

You must also prepare **a fourth** of a hin of wine as the drink offering. (Numbers 15:5 ULT)

They were to imagine dividing a hin of wine into four equal parts and prepare the amount equal to one of them.

This page answers the question: *What are fractions and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Numbers ([UTA PDF](#))

Translation Strategies

If a fraction in your language would give the right meaning, consider using it. If not, you could consider these strategies.

- (1) Tell the number of parts or groups that the item would be divided into, and then tell the number of parts or groups that is being referred to.
- (2) For measurements such as for weight and length, use a unit that your people might know or the unit in the UST.
- (3) For measurements, use ones that are used in your language. In order to do that you would need to know how your measurements relates to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

Examples of These Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Tell the number of parts or groups that the item would be divided into, and then tell the number of parts or groups that is being referred to.

A third of the ocean became red like blood (Revelation 8:8 ULT)

It was like they **divided** the ocean **into three parts**, and **one part** of the ocean became blood.

Then you must offer with the bull a grain offering of **three-tenths** of an ephah of fine flour mixed with **half a hin** of oil. (Numbers 15:9 ULT)

... then you must **divide** an ephah of fine flour **into ten parts** and **divide** a hin of oil **into two parts**. Then mix **three of those parts** of the flour with **one of the parts** of oil. Then you must offer that grain offering along with the bull.

- (2) For measurements, use the measurements that are given in the UST. The translators of the UST have already figured how to represent the amounts in the metric system.

... **two-thirds of a shekel** ... (1 Samuel 13:21b ULT)

... **eight grams** of silver ... (1 Samuel 13:21b UST)

... **three-tenths of an ephah** of fine flour mixed with **half a hin** of oil. (Numbers 15:9b ULT)

... **six and one-half liters** of finely ground flour mixed with **two liters** of olive oil. (Numbers 15:9b UST)

- (3) For measurements, use ones that are used in your language. In order to do that you would need to know how your measurements relates to the metric system and figure out each measurement.

... **three-tenths of an ephah** of fine flour mixed with **half a hin** of oil. (Numbers 15:9b ULT)

six quarts of fine flour mixed with **two quarts** of oil.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Ordinal Numbers \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Biblical Money \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Numbers 5:7](#); [Numbers 5:15](#); [Numbers 28:5](#); [Numbers 28:7](#); [Numbers 28:9](#); [Numbers 28:12](#); [Numbers 28:13](#); [Numbers 28:14](#); [Numbers 28:20](#); [Numbers 28:21](#); [Numbers 28:28](#); [Numbers 28:29](#); [Numbers 29:3](#); [Numbers 29:4](#); [Numbers 29:9](#); [Numbers 29:10](#); [Numbers 29:14](#); [Numbers 29:15](#)

Go and Come

Description

This page answers the question: *What do I do if the word "go" or "come" is confusing in a certain sentence?*

Different languages have different ways of determining whether to use the words "go" or "come" and whether to use the words "take" or "bring" when talking about motion. For example, when saying that they are approaching a person who has called them, English speakers say "I'm coming," while Spanish speakers say "I'm going." You will need to study the context in order to understand what is meant by the words "go" and "come" (and also "take" and "bring"), and then translate those words in a way that your readers will understand which direction people are moving in.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of talking about motion. The biblical languages or your source language may use the words "go" and "come" or "take" and "bring" differently than your language uses them. If these words are not translated in the way that is natural in your language, your readers may be confused about which direction people are moving.

Examples From the Bible

Yahweh said to Noah, "**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark." (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

In some languages, this would lead people to think that Yahweh was in the ark.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.
Then you will be free from my oath. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to his servant. Abraham's relatives lived far away from where he and his servant were standing and he wanted his servant to **go** to them, not **come** toward Abraham.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14a ULT)

Moses is speaking to the people in the wilderness. They had not yet gone into the land that God was giving them. In some languages, it would make more sense to say, "When you have **gone** into the land ..."

They **brought** him up to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (Luke 2:22b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to say that they **took** or **carried** Jesus to the temple.

Then see, there was a man whose name was Jairus, and he was a leader of the synagogue. And falling at the feet of Jesus, he begged him to come to his house. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

The man was not at his house when he spoke to Jesus. He wanted Jesus to **go** with him to his house.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to ask what did you come out to see.

Translation Strategies

If the word used in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other strategies.

- (1) Use the word "go," "come," "take," or "bring" that would be natural in your language.
- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the word "go," "come," "take," or "bring" that would be natural in your language.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.
(Genesis 24:41 ULT)

But you will be free from my oath if you **go** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you come out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14 ULT)

"When you have **arrived** in the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ..."

Yahweh said to Noah, "**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark ..." (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

Yahweh said to Noah, "**Enter**, you and all your household, into the ark ..."

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you travel out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

"

Referenced in: [Numbers 22:7](#); [Numbers 22:16](#)

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: [Numbers 1:1](#); [Numbers 1:18](#); [Numbers 9:1](#); [Numbers 9:5](#); [Numbers 9:11](#); [Numbers 10:10](#); [Numbers 10:11](#); [Numbers 20:1](#); [Numbers 28:16](#); [Numbers 28:17](#); [Numbers 29:1](#); [Numbers 29:7](#); [Numbers 29:12](#); [Numbers 33:3](#); [Numbers 33:38](#)

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: Numbers 1:5; Numbers 1:6; Numbers 3:2; Numbers 3:17; Numbers 3:21; Numbers 3:24; Numbers 3:27; Numbers 3:30; Numbers 3:33; Numbers 7:41; Numbers 7:77; Numbers 10:29; Numbers 11:34; Numbers 11:35; Numbers 13:4; Numbers 13:5; Numbers 13:6; Numbers 13:7; Numbers 13:8; Numbers 13:9; Numbers 13:10; Numbers 13:11; Numbers 13:12; Numbers 13:13; Numbers 13:14; Numbers 13:15; Numbers 13:21; Numbers 13:22; Numbers 13:23; Numbers 13:33; Numbers 14:6; Numbers 21:14; Numbers 21:19; Numbers 21:20; Numbers 21:23; Numbers 21:30; Numbers 22:2; Numbers 22:5; Numbers 22:39; Numbers 23:14; Numbers 24:7; Numbers 24:21; Numbers 24:24; Numbers 25:1; Numbers 25:14; Numbers 25:15; Numbers 26:5; Numbers 26:8; Numbers 26:12; Numbers 26:15; Numbers 26:19; Numbers 26:23; Numbers 26:26; Numbers 26:28; Numbers 26:30; Numbers 26:33; Numbers 26:35; Numbers 26:38; Numbers 26:42; Numbers 26:44; Numbers 26:48; Numbers 26:57; Numbers 27:12; Numbers 31:8; Numbers 32:3; Numbers 32:9; Numbers 32:12; Numbers 32:33; Numbers 32:34; Numbers 32:35; Numbers 32:36; Numbers 32:37; Numbers 32:38; Numbers 32:41; Numbers 32:42; Numbers 33:3; Numbers 33:5; Numbers 33:8; Numbers 33:11; Numbers 33:15; Numbers 33:19; Numbers 33:23; Numbers 33:27; Numbers 33:31; Numbers 33:35; Numbers 33:40; Numbers 33:41; Numbers 33:44; Numbers 33:47; Numbers 34:19; Numbers 34:27; Numbers 36:1; Numbers 36:2; Numbers 36:11

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: [Numbers 11:22](#); [Numbers 16:13](#); [Numbers 20 General Notes](#); [Numbers 22:5](#)

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: [Numbers 5:11](#); [Numbers 12:14](#); [Numbers 22:18](#); [Numbers 22:33](#); [Numbers 24:13](#)

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: Numbers 1:18; Numbers 1:50; Numbers 3:4; Numbers 3:8; Numbers 4:5; Numbers 5:12; Numbers 5:14; Numbers 5:19; Numbers 5:20; Numbers 5:21; Numbers 5:29; Numbers 5:30; Numbers 6:2; Numbers 6:3; Numbers 6:4; Numbers 6:5; Numbers 6:6; Numbers 6:7; Numbers 6:8; Numbers 6:13; Numbers 6:18; Numbers 6:21; Numbers 6:24; Numbers 6:25; Numbers 6:26; Numbers 7:84; Numbers 8:16; Numbers 9:1; Numbers 9:3; Numbers 9:4; Numbers 9:6; Numbers 9:10; Numbers 9:11; Numbers 9:13; Numbers 9:20; Numbers 10:9; Numbers 10:31; Numbers 11:14; Numbers 14:22; Numbers 15:20; Numbers 15:40; Numbers 16:3; Numbers 16:7; Numbers 18:15; Numbers 20:19; Numbers 21:11; Numbers 21:20; Numbers 22:5; Numbers 22:22; Numbers 22:27; Numbers 24:2; Numbers 24:3; Numbers 24:4; Numbers 24:10; Numbers 24:15; Numbers 25:3; Numbers 25:6; Numbers 27:16; Numbers 27:17; Numbers 29:12; Numbers 30:4; Numbers 30:5; Numbers 30:7; Numbers 30:9; Numbers 30:11; Numbers 30:12; Numbers 30:14; Numbers 31:16; Numbers 32:5; Numbers 32:13; Numbers 32:20; Numbers 32:32

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: [Numbers 23:9](#); [Numbers 31:49](#)

Merism

Definition

Merism is a figure of speech in which a person refers to something by speaking of two extreme parts of it. By referring to the extreme parts, the speaker intends to include also everything in between those parts.

"I am **the alpha and the omega**," says the Lord God, "the one who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (Revelation 1:8 ULT)

I am **the alpha and the omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end**. (Revelation 22:13, ULT)

This page answers the question: *What does the word merism mean and how can I translate phrases that have it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Alpha and omega are the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet. This is a merism that includes everything from the beginning to the end. It means eternal.

... I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth** ..., (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

Heaven and earth is a merism that includes everything that exists.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not use merism. The readers of those languages may think that the phrase only applies to the items mentioned. They may not realize that it refers to those two things and everything in between.

Examples From the Bible

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

This bolded phrase is a merism because it speaks of the east and the west and everywhere in between. It means "everywhere."

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13)

The bolded phrase is merism because it speaks of old people and young people and everyone in between. It means "everyone."

Translation Strategies

If the merism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.
- (2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Identify what the merism refers to without mentioning the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything**.

From the rising of the sun to its setting, Yahweh's name should be praised. (Psalm 113:3 ULT)

In all places, people should praise Yahweh's name.

(2) Identify what the merism refers to and include the parts.

I praise you, Father, Lord of **heaven and earth**. (Matthew 11:25b ULT)

I praise you, Father, Lord of **everything, including both what is in heaven and what is on earth**.

He will bless those who honor him, both **young and old**. (Psalm 115:13 ULT)

He will bless **all those** who honor him, regardless of whether they are **young or old**.

"

Referenced in: [Numbers 6:4](#); [Numbers 21:30](#); [Numbers 27:21](#)

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: Numbers 1:53; Numbers 3:18; Numbers 3:21; Numbers 5:2; Numbers 5:21; Numbers 5:28; Numbers 6:7; Numbers 6:27; Numbers 8:19; Numbers 9:6; Numbers 9:10; Numbers 9:13; Numbers 10:35; Numbers 11:10; Numbers 11:11; Numbers 11:12; Numbers 11:14; Numbers 11:17; Numbers 11:20; Numbers 11:25; Numbers 11:26; Numbers 11:29; Numbers 12:5; Numbers 12:9; Numbers 12:15; Numbers 13:27; Numbers 13:32; Numbers 13:33; Numbers 14:8; Numbers 14:9; Numbers 14:14; Numbers 14:15; Numbers 14:18; Numbers 14:42; Numbers 14:43; Numbers 15:3; Numbers 15:7; Numbers 15:10; Numbers 15:13; Numbers 15:14; Numbers 15:24; Numbers 15:30; Numbers 15:31; Numbers 15:39; Numbers 16:2; Numbers 16:3; Numbers 16:10; Numbers 16:13; Numbers 16:14; Numbers 16:21; Numbers 16:26; Numbers 16:32; Numbers 16:34; Numbers 16:35; Numbers 16:45; Numbers 18:6; Numbers 18:13; Numbers 18:17; Numbers 18:20; Numbers 18:21; Numbers 18:23; Numbers 18:24; Numbers 18:26; Numbers 19:7; Numbers 19:9; Numbers 19:10; Numbers 19:11; Numbers 19:13; Numbers 19:14; Numbers 19:17; Numbers 19:20; Numbers 21:28; Numbers 22:8; Numbers 22:38; Numbers 23:5; Numbers 23:10; Numbers 23:12; Numbers 23:16; Numbers 23:24; Numbers 24:8; Numbers 24:21; Numbers 25:11; Numbers 27:12; Numbers 27:20; Numbers 30:2; Numbers 30:3; Numbers 30:4; Numbers 30:6; Numbers 30:7; Numbers 30:8; Numbers 30:14; Numbers 32:4; Numbers 32:5; Numbers 32:10; Numbers 32:11; Numbers 32:13; Numbers 32:14; Numbers 32:18; Numbers 32:21; Numbers 32:32; Numbers 33:4; Numbers 33:54; Numbers 35:22; Numbers 35:33; Numbers 36:8; Numbers 36:9; Numbers 36:12

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: [Numbers 3:4](#); [Numbers 3:6](#); [Numbers 3:8](#); [Numbers 3:48](#); [Numbers 3:51](#); [Numbers 4:5](#); [Numbers 4:15](#); [Numbers 4:16](#); [Numbers 5:7](#); [Numbers 5:8](#); [Numbers 5:14](#); [Numbers 5:30](#); [Numbers 6:9](#); [Numbers 7:2](#); [Numbers 10:2](#); [Numbers 10:5](#); [Numbers 10:6](#); [Numbers 10:9](#); [Numbers 10:10](#); [Numbers 11:17](#); [Numbers 11:23](#); [Numbers 11:25](#); [Numbers 12:7](#); [Numbers 12:11](#); [Numbers 13:26](#); [Numbers 13:27](#); [Numbers 14:3](#); [Numbers 14:22](#); [Numbers 14:24](#); [Numbers 14:29](#); [Numbers 14:32](#); [Numbers 14:33](#); [Numbers 14:43](#); [Numbers 15:20](#); [Numbers 15:31](#); [Numbers 15:39](#); [Numbers 16:22](#); [Numbers 16:38](#); [Numbers 16:46](#); [Numbers 16:47](#); [Numbers 18:5](#); [Numbers 18:6](#); [Numbers 18:7](#); [Numbers 19:12](#); [Numbers 20:3](#); [Numbers 20:9](#); [Numbers 20:16](#); [Numbers 20:17](#); [Numbers 20:18](#); [Numbers 20:20](#); [Numbers 21:1](#); [Numbers 21:2](#); [Numbers 21:3](#); [Numbers 21:17](#); [Numbers 21:21](#); [Numbers 21:24](#); [Numbers 22:3](#); [Numbers 22:28](#); [Numbers 22:31](#); [Numbers 23:9](#); [Numbers 23:10](#); [Numbers 23:23](#); [Numbers 24:7](#); [Numbers 24:17](#); [Numbers 24:18](#); [Numbers 24:19](#); [Numbers 26:61](#); [Numbers 30:2](#); [Numbers 30:12](#); [Numbers 32:5](#); [Numbers 32:22](#); [Numbers 35:19](#); [Numbers 35:24](#); [Numbers 35:27](#); [Numbers 36:7](#)

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: Numbers 1:3; Numbers 1:21; Numbers 1:23; Numbers 1:25; Numbers 1:27; Numbers 1:29; Numbers 1:31; Numbers 1:33; Numbers 1:35; Numbers 1:37; Numbers 1:39; Numbers 1:41; Numbers 1:43; Numbers 1:46; Numbers 2:4; Numbers 2:6; Numbers 2:8; Numbers 2:9; Numbers 2:11; Numbers 2:13; Numbers 2:15; Numbers 2:16; Numbers 2:19; Numbers 2:21; Numbers 2:23; Numbers 2:24; Numbers 2:26; Numbers 2:28; Numbers 2:30; Numbers 2:31; Numbers 2:32; Numbers 3:22; Numbers 3:28; Numbers 3:34; Numbers 3:39; Numbers 3:43; Numbers 3:46; Numbers 3:50; Numbers 4:3; Numbers 4:23; Numbers 4:30; Numbers 4:35; Numbers 4:36; Numbers 4:39; Numbers 4:40; Numbers 4:43; Numbers 4:44; Numbers 4:47; Numbers 4:48; Numbers 7:3; Numbers 7:85; Numbers 7:86; Numbers 8:24; Numbers 8:25; Numbers 11:21; Numbers 13:25; Numbers 16:2; Numbers 16:35; Numbers 16:49; Numbers 17:2; Numbers 20:29; Numbers 26:2; Numbers 26:4; Numbers 26:7; Numbers 26:10; Numbers 26:14; Numbers 26:18; Numbers 26:22; Numbers 26:25; Numbers 26:27; Numbers 26:34; Numbers 26:37; Numbers 26:41; Numbers 26:43; Numbers 26:47; Numbers 26:50; Numbers 26:51; Numbers 26:62; Numbers 29:13; Numbers 29:14; Numbers 29:15; Numbers 29:17; Numbers 29:20; Numbers 29:23; Numbers 29:26; Numbers 29:29; Numbers 29:32; Numbers 31:4; Numbers 31:5; Numbers 31:14; Numbers 31:28; Numbers 31:32; Numbers 31:33; Numbers 31:34; Numbers 31:35; Numbers 31:36; Numbers 31:37; Numbers 31:38; Numbers 31:39; Numbers 31:40; Numbers 31:42; Numbers 31:43; Numbers 31:44; Numbers 31:46; Numbers 31:47; Numbers 31:48; Numbers 31:52; Numbers 32:11; Numbers 32:13; Numbers 33:9; Numbers 33:39; Numbers 35:4; Numbers 35:5; Numbers 35:6; Numbers 35:7

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: [Numbers 1:1](#); [Numbers 1:18](#); [Numbers 2:16](#); [Numbers 2:24](#); [Numbers 6:9](#); [Numbers 6:10](#); [Numbers 7:12](#); [Numbers 7:18](#); [Numbers 7:24](#); [Numbers 7:30](#); [Numbers 7:36](#); [Numbers 7:42](#); [Numbers 7:48](#); [Numbers 7:54](#);

Numbers 7:60; Numbers 7:66; Numbers 7:72; Numbers 7:78; Numbers 9:1; Numbers 9:3; Numbers 10:6; Numbers 10:11; Numbers 10:14; Numbers 29:7; Numbers 29:12; Numbers 29:17; Numbers 29:20; Numbers 29:23; Numbers 29:26; Numbers 29:29; Numbers 29:32; Numbers 29:35; Numbers 33:3; Numbers 33:38

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.

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](#))

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)

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: [Numbers 1:18](#); [Numbers 3:16](#); [Numbers 3:51](#); [Numbers 4:20](#); [Numbers 5:10](#); [Numbers 6:21](#); [Numbers 7:2](#); [Numbers 7:89](#); [Numbers 8:16](#); [Numbers 8:20](#); [Numbers 9:3](#); [Numbers 9:14](#); [Numbers 10:4](#); [Numbers 11:33](#); [Numbers 12:8](#); [Numbers 17:12](#); [Numbers 18:15](#); [Numbers 18:19](#); [Numbers 19:13](#); [Numbers 20:26](#); [Numbers 21:18](#); [Numbers 21:27](#); [Numbers 21:28](#); [Numbers 21:29](#); [Numbers 22:3](#); [Numbers 23:7](#); [Numbers 23:9](#); [Numbers 23:18](#); [Numbers 23:19](#); [Numbers 23:21](#); [Numbers 23:23](#); [Numbers 24:5](#); [Numbers 24:7](#); [Numbers 24:17](#); [Numbers 27:21](#); [Numbers 30:2](#); [Numbers 30:8](#)

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: [Numbers 5:14](#); [Numbers 5:19](#); [Numbers 10:33](#); [Numbers 10:35](#); [Numbers 10:36](#); [Numbers 21:17](#); [Numbers 21:20](#); [Numbers 26:10](#); [Numbers 32:23](#)

Possession

Description

In English, the grammatical form that commonly indicates possession is also used to indicate a variety of relationships between people and objects or people and other people. In English, that grammatical relationship is shown by using the word “**of**,” by using **an apostrophe and the letter “s”**, or by using a **possessive pronoun**. The following examples are different ways to indicate that my grandfather owns a house.

- the house **of** my grandfather
- my grandfather **'s** house
- **his** house

This page answers the question: *What is possession and how can I translate phrases that show it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Parts of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

Sentence Structure ([UTA PDF](#))

Possession is used in Hebrew, Greek, and English for a variety of situations. Here are a few common situations that it is used for.

- Ownership — Someone owns something.
 - The clothes of me - my clothes — The clothes that I own
- Social Relationship — Someone has some kind of social relationship with another.
 - The mother of John — John's mother - the woman who gave birth to John, or the woman who cared for John
 - A teacher of Israel - Israel's teacher — a person who teaches Israel
- Association — A particular thing is associated with a particular person, place, or thing.
 - The sickness of David - David's sickness — the sickness that David is experiencing
 - the fear of the Lord — the fear that is appropriate for a human being to have when relating to the Lord
- Contents — Something has something in it.
 - a bag of clothes — a bag that has clothes in it, or a bag that is full of clothes
- Part and whole: One thing is part of another.
 - my head — the head that is part of my body
 - the roof of a house — the roof that is part of a house

In some languages there is a special form of possession, termed **inalienable possession**. This form of possession is used for things that cannot be removed from you, as opposed to things you could lose. In the examples above, *my head* and *my mother* are examples of inalienable possession (at least in some languages), while *my clothes* or *my teacher* would be alienably possessed. What may be considered alienable vs. inalienable may differ by language. In languages that mark the difference, the expression of inalienable possession and alienable possession will be different.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- You (the translator) need to understand the relationship between two ideas represented by the two nouns when one is in the grammatical relationship of possessing the other.
- Some languages do not use grammatical possession for all of the situations that your source text Bible might use it for.

Examples From the Bible

Ownership — In the example below, the son owned the money.

| The younger son ... wasted his wealth by living recklessly. (Luke 15:13b)

Social Relationship — In the example below, the disciples were people who learned from John.

| Then **the disciples of John** came to him. (Matthew 9:14a ULT)

Association — In the example below, the gospel is the message associated with Paul because he preaches it.

| Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, from the seed of David, according to **my gospel**,
(2 Timothy 2:8 ULT)

Material — In the example below, the material used for making the crowns was gold.

| On their heads were something like **crowns of gold**. (Revelation 9:7b)

Contents — In the example below, the cup has water in it.

| For whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink ... will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

Part of a whole — In the example below, the door was a part of the palace.

| But Uriah slept at **the door of the king's palace**. (2 Samuel 11:9a ULT)

Part of a group — In the example below, “us” refers to the whole group and “each one” refers to the individual members.

| Now to **each one of us** grace has been given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
(Ephesians 4:7 ULT)

Events and Possession

Sometimes one or both of the nouns is an abstract noun that refers to an event or action. In the examples below, the abstract nouns are in **bold** print. These are just some of the relationships that are possible between two nouns when one of them refers to an event.

Subject — Sometimes the word after “of” tells who would do the action named by the first noun. In the example below, **John baptized people**.

| The **baptism of John**, was it from heaven or from men? Answer me. (Mark 11:30)

In the example below, **Christ loves us**.

| Who will separate us from the **love of Christ**? (Romans 8:35)

Object — Sometimes the word after “of” tells who or what something would happen to. In the example below, **people love money**.

| For the **love of money** is a root of all kinds of evil. (1 Timothy 6:10a ULT)

Instrument — Sometimes the word after “of” tells how something would happen. In the example below, God would **punish people by sending enemies to attack them with swords**.

| Then be afraid of the sword, because wrath brings **the punishment of the sword**. (Job 19:29a ULT)

Representation — In the example below, John was baptizing people who were repenting of their sins. They were being baptized to show that they were repenting. Their **baptism represented their repentance**.

| John came, baptizing in the wilderness and preaching **a baptism of repentance** for the forgiveness of sins. (Mark 1:4 ULT)

Strategies for learning what the relationship is between the two nouns

- (1) Read the surrounding verses to see if they help you to understand the relationship between the two nouns.
- (2) Read the verse in the UST. Sometimes it shows the relationship clearly.
- (3) See what the notes say about it.

Translation Strategies

If possession would be a natural way to show a particular relationship between two nouns, consider using it. If it would be strange or hard to understand, consider these.

- (1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.
- (2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.
- (3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use an adjective to show that one noun describes the other.

On their heads were something like **crowns of gold**. (Revelation 9:7b)

“On their heads were **gold crowns**”

- (2) Use a verb to show how the two are related.

Whoever gives you **a cup of water** to drink ... will not lose his reward. (Mark 9:41 ULT)

Whoever gives you a **cup that has water in it** to drink ... will not lose his reward.

Wealth is worthless on **the day of wrath**. (Proverbs 11:4a ULT)

Wealth is worthless on **the day when God shows his wrath**. or: Wealth is worthless on the **day when God punishes people because of his wrath**.

- (3) If one of the nouns refers to an event, translate it as a verb. (In the example below, there are two possession relationships, “punishment of Yahweh” and “your God.”)

Notice that I am not speaking to your children, who have not known or seen **the punishment of Yahweh your God**. (Deuteronomy 11:2a ULT)

Notice that I am not speaking to your children who have not known or seen **how Yahweh, the God whom you worship, punished the people of Egypt**.

You will only observe and see the **punishment of the wicked**. (Psalms 91:8 ULT)

You will only observe and see **how Yahweh punishes the wicked**.

You will receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit**. (Acts 2:38b ULT)

You will receive the **Holy Spirit, whom God will give to you**.

”

Referenced in: [Numbers 28:31](#); [Numbers 29:3](#); [Numbers 29:6](#); [Numbers 29:11](#); [Numbers 29:19](#); [Numbers 29:22](#); [Numbers 29:25](#); [Numbers 29:28](#); [Numbers 29:31](#); [Numbers 29:34](#); [Numbers 29:37](#); [Numbers 29:38](#)

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)

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.

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](#))

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: [Numbers 13:2](#)

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: [Numbers 18:3](#)

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: Numbers 9:7; Numbers 11:4; Numbers 11:11; Numbers 11:12; Numbers 11:13; Numbers 11:18; Numbers 11:20; Numbers 11:22; Numbers 11:23; Numbers 11:29; Numbers 12:2; Numbers 12:8; Numbers 13:19; Numbers 14:3; Numbers 14:11; Numbers 14:27; Numbers 14:41; Numbers 16:3; Numbers 16:9; Numbers 16:11; Numbers 16:13; Numbers 16:14; Numbers 16:22; Numbers 20:4; Numbers 20:5; Numbers 20:10; Numbers 21:5; Numbers 22:9; Numbers 22:30; Numbers 22:32; Numbers 22:37; Numbers 22:38; Numbers 23:8; Numbers 23:10; Numbers 23:11; Numbers 23:12; Numbers 23:19; Numbers 23:26; Numbers 24:9; Numbers 24:13; Numbers 24:23; Numbers 27:4; Numbers 31:15; Numbers 32:6; Numbers 32:7

Simile

Description

A simile is a comparison of two things that are not normally thought to be similar. The simile focuses on a particular trait the two items have in common, and it includes the words “like,” “as,” or “than.”

This page answers the question: *What is a simile?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech ([UTA PDF](#))

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were troubled and discouraged, **like sheep not having a shepherd**. (Matthew 9:36)

Jesus compared the crowds of people to sheep without a shepherd. Sheep grow frightened when they do not have a good shepherd to lead them in safe places. The crowds were like that because they did not have good religious leaders.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, so be as wise **as the serpents** and harmless **as the doves**. (Matthew 10:16 ULT)

Jesus compared his disciples to sheep and their enemies to wolves. Wolves attack sheep; Jesus' enemies would attack his disciples.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

God's word is compared to a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword is a weapon that can easily cut through a person's flesh. God's word is very effective in showing what is in a person's heart and thoughts.

Purposes of Simile

- A simile can teach about something that is unknown by showing how it is similar to something that is known.
- A simile can emphasize a particular trait, sometimes in a way that gets people's attention.
- Similes help form a picture in the mind or help the reader experience what he is reading about more fully.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- People may not know how the two items are similar.
- People may not be familiar with both of the items being compared.

Examples From the Bible

Suffer hardship with me, **as a good soldier** of Christ Jesus. (2 Timothy 2:3 ULT)

In this simile, Paul compares suffering with what soldiers endure, and he encourages Timothy to follow their example.

Just as the lightning flashing from a place under the sky shines to another place under the sky, so will the Son of Man be. (Luke 17:24b ULT)

This verse does not tell how the Son of Man will be like the lightning. But in context we can understand from the verses before it that just as lightning flashes suddenly and everyone can see it, the Son of Man will come suddenly and everyone will be able to see him. No one will have to be told about it.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the correct meaning of a simile, consider using it. If they would not, here are some strategies you can use:

(1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience. (2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote. (3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.

See, I send **you out among wicked people** and you will be in danger from them **as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves**.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

For the word of God is living and active and **more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword**.

(2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.

See, I send you out **as chickens in the midst of wild dogs**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to gather your children together, **as a mother closely watches over her infants**, but you refused!

If you have faith **as a grain of mustard** ... (Matthew 17:20)

If you have faith even as small **as a tiny seed**,

(3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT)

See, I send you out among **people who will want to harm you**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to **protect you**, but you refused!

Next we recommend you learn about:

Metaphor ([UTA PDF](#))

Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Numbers 8:4](#); [Numbers 8:11](#); [Numbers 8:13](#); [Numbers 8:15](#); [Numbers 9:15](#); [Numbers 9:16](#); [Numbers 12:10](#); [Numbers 12:12](#); [Numbers 13:33](#); [Numbers 16:30](#); [Numbers 22:4](#); [Numbers 23:22](#); [Numbers 24:6](#); [Numbers 24:8](#); [Numbers 24:9](#); [Numbers 27:17](#); [Numbers 33:55](#)

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.

"

Referenced in: [Numbers 8:7](#); [Numbers 8:10](#); [Numbers 8:12](#); [Numbers 12:14](#); [Numbers 14:5](#); [Numbers 14:6](#); [Numbers 16:4](#); [Numbers 16:22](#); [Numbers 16:45](#); [Numbers 18:19](#); [Numbers 20:6](#); [Numbers 22:31](#); [Numbers 24:4](#); [Numbers 24:10](#); [Numbers 24:16](#); [Numbers 25:2](#); [Numbers 27:18](#); [Numbers 27:23](#)

Symbolic Language

Description

Symbolic language in speech and writing is the use of symbols to represent other things, other events, etc. In the Bible it occurs most in prophecy and poetry, especially in visions and dreams about things that will happen in the future. Though people may not immediately know the meaning of a symbol, it is important to keep the symbol in the translation.

This page answers the question: *What is symbolic language and how do I translate it?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Writing Styles ([UTA PDF](#))

■ Eat this scroll; then go speak to the house of Israel. (Ezekiel 3:1 ULT)

This was in a dream. Eating the scroll is a symbol of Ezekiel reading and understanding well what was written on the scroll, and accepting these words from God into himself.

Purposes of Symbolism

- One purpose of symbolism is to help people understand the importance or severity of an event by putting it in other, very dramatic terms.
- Another purpose of symbolism is to tell some people about something while hiding the true meaning from others who do not understand the symbolism.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

People who read the Bible today may find it hard to recognize that the language is symbolic, and they may not know what the symbol stands for.

Translation Principles

- When symbolic language is used, it is important to keep the symbol in the translation.
- It is also important not to explain the symbol more than the original speaker or writer did, since he may not have wanted everyone living then to be able to understand it easily.

Examples From the Bible

■ After this I saw in my visions of the night **a fourth animal**, terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had **large iron teeth**; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had **ten horns**. (Daniel 7:7 ULT)

The meaning of the bolded symbols is explained in Daniel 7:23-24 as shown below. The animals represent kingdoms, iron teeth represent a powerful army, and the horns represent powerful leaders.

■ This is what that person said, 'As for the fourth animal, it will be **a fourth kingdom** on earth that will be different from all the other kingdoms. It will devour the whole earth, and it will trample it down and break it into pieces. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom **ten kings** will arise, and another will arise after them. He will be different from the previous ones, and he will conquer the three kings.' (Daniel 7:23-24 ULT)

■ I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me, and as I turned I saw **seven golden lampstands**. In the middle of the lampstands there was one like a son of man ... He had **seven stars** in his right hand and **a sword with two sharp edges** was coming out of his mouth. As for the hidden meaning about the seven stars that you saw in my right hand, and the seven

golden lampstands: **The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches**, and **the seven lampstands are the seven churches**. (Revelation 1:12-13a, 16a, 20 ULT)

This passage explains the meaning of the seven lampstands and the seven stars. The two-edged sword represents God's word and judgment.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Translate the text with the symbols. Often the speaker or author explains the meaning later in the passage.
- (2) Translate the text with the symbols. Then explain the symbols in footnotes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate the text with the symbols. Often the speaker or author explains the meaning later in the passage.

This is what that person said, 'As for the fourth animal, it will be **a fourth kingdom** on earth that will be different from all the other kingdoms. It will devour the whole earth, and it will trample it down and break it into pieces. As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom **ten kings** will arise, and another will arise after them. He will be different from the previous ones, and he will conquer the three kings.' (Daniel 7:23-24 ULT)

- (2) Translate the text with the symbols. Then explain the symbols in footnotes.

After this I saw in my visions of the night **a fourth animal**, terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had **large iron teeth**; it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had **ten horns**. (Daniel 7:7 ULT)

After this I saw in my dream at night a fourth animal, ¹ terrifying, frightening, and very strong. It had large iron teeth; ² it devoured, broke in pieces, and trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from the other animals, and it had ten horns. ³

The footnotes would look like:

[1] The animal is a symbol for a kingdom. [2] The iron teeth is a symbol for the kingdom's powerful army. [3] The horns are a symbol of powerful kings.

"

Referenced in: [Numbers 24:17](#)

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: [Numbers 1:49](#); [Numbers 2:17](#); [Numbers 4:15](#); [Numbers 7:89](#); [Numbers 10:9](#); [Numbers 16:15](#); [Numbers 17:4](#); [Numbers 17:7](#); [Numbers 17:10](#); [Numbers 20:8](#); [Numbers 20:12](#); [Numbers 20:18](#); [Numbers 21:23](#); [Numbers 27:14](#); [Numbers 27:16](#); [Numbers 27:19](#); [Numbers 29:1](#); [Numbers 30:8](#); [Numbers 32:7](#); [Numbers 32:9](#)

Translate Unknowns

While working to translate the Bible, you (the translator) might find yourself asking: “How do I translate words like lion, fig tree, mountain, priest, or temple when people in my culture have never seen these things and we do not have a word for them?”

This page answers the question: *How can I translate ideas that my readers are not familiar with?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Sentence Structure ([UTA PDF](#))

Description

Unknowns are things that occur in the source text that are not known to the people of your culture. The unfoldingWord® Translation Words pages and the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes will help you understand what they are. After you understand them, you will need to find ways to refer to those things so that people who read your translation will understand what they are.

They said to him, “We have nothing here except five loaves of **bread** and two fish.” (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

Bread is a particular food made by mixing finely crushed grains with oil, and then cooking the mixture so that it is dry. (Grains are the seeds of a kind of grass.) In some cultures people do not have bread and do not know what it is.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Readers may not know some of the things that are in the Bible because those things are not part of their own culture.
- Readers may have difficulty understanding a text if they do not know some of the things that are mentioned in it.

Translation Principles

- Use words that are already part of your language if possible.
- Keep expressions short if possible.
- Represent God's commands and historical facts accurately.

Examples From the Bible

So I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **jackals**. (Jeremiah 9:11a ULT)

Jackals are wild animals like dogs that live in only a few parts of the world. So they are not known in many places.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous **wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

If wolves do not live where the translation will be read, the readers may not understand that they are fierce, wild animals like dogs that attack and eat sheep.

They offered him wine mixed with **myrrh**, but he did not drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULT)

People may not know what myrrh is and that it was used as a medicine.

... to him who made **great lights** ... (Psalm 136:7a ULT)

Some languages have terms for things that give light, like the sun and fire, but they have no general term for lights.

Your sins ... will be white like **snow**. (Isaiah 1:18b ULT)

People in many parts of the world have not seen snow, but they may have seen it in pictures.

Translation Strategies

Here are ways you might translate a term that is not known in your language:

- (1) Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.
- (2) Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.
- (3) Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.
- (4) Use a word that is more general in meaning.
- (5) Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a phrase that describes what the unknown item is, or what is important about the unknown item for the verse being translated.

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but are inwardly they are **ravenous wolves**. (Matthew 7:15 ULT)

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but **inwardly they are very hungry and dangerous animals**.

"Ravenous wolves" is part of a metaphor here, so the reader needs to know that they are very dangerous to sheep in order to understand this metaphor. (If sheep are also unknown, then you will need to also use one of the translation strategies to translate sheep, or change the metaphor to something else, using a translation strategy for metaphors. See [Translating Metaphors](#).)

"We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except five **loaves of baked grain seeds** and two fish.

- (2) Substitute something similar from your language if doing so does not falsely represent a historical fact.

Your sins ... will be white like **snow**. (Isaiah 1:18b ULT) This verse is not about snow. It uses snow in a figure of speech to help people understand how white something will be.

Your sins ... will be white like **milk**.

Your sins ... will be white like **the moon**.

- (3) Copy the word from another language, and add a general word or descriptive phrase to help people understand it.

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with **myrrh**. But he refused to drink it. (Mark 15:23 ULT) — People may understand better what myrrh is if it is used with the general word "medicine."

Then they tried to give Jesus wine that was mixed with **a medicine called myrrh**. But he refused to drink it.

"We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT) —
People may understand better what bread is if it is used with a phrase that tells what it is made
of (seeds) and how it is prepared (crushed and baked).

We have nothing here except five loaves of **baked crushed seed bread**
and two fish.

(4) Use a word that is more general in meaning.

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **jackals** (Jeremiah 9:11a ULT)

I will turn Jerusalem into piles of ruins, a hideout for **wild dogs**

"We have nothing here except five **loaves of bread** and two fish." (Matthew 14:17 ULT)

We have nothing here except five **loaves of baked food** and two fish.

(5) Use a word or phrase that is more specific in meaning.

... to him who made **great lights** ... (Psalm 136:7a ULT)

to him who made **the sun and the moon**

Next we recommend you learn about:

Copy or Borrow Words ([UTA PDF](#))

How to Translate Names ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Numbers 11:31](#); [Numbers 24:6](#); [Numbers 27:21](#)



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 77

anoint, anointed, anointing

Definition:

The term “anoint” means to rub or pour oil on a person or object. In biblical times, there were several reasons for anointing someone with oil. Often this was a [Symbolic Action](#), representing God empowering that person with the Holy Spirit for special service to him.

- In the Old Testament, priests, kings, and prophets were anointed with oil to set them apart for special service to God.
- Objects such as altars or the tabernacle were also anointed with oil to show that they were to be used to worship and glorify God.
- In the New Testament, sick people were anointed with oil for their healing.
- Sometimes the oil was mixed with spices, giving it a sweet, perfumed smell.
- The New Testament records two times that Jesus was anointed with perfumed oil by a woman, as an act of worship.
- People prepared dead bodies for burial by anointing them with perfumed oils and spices.
- In the New Testament, receiving the Holy Spirit is described as anointing.
- The titles “Messiah” (Hebrew) and “Christ” (Greek) mean “the Anointed (One).”
- Jesus the Messiah is the one who was chosen and anointed as a Prophet, High Priest, and King.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term “anoint” could be translated as “pour/put oil on” or “consecrate by pouring oil on” or “consecrate” or “appoint.”
- Depending on the context, to “be anointed” could be translated as “be consecrated with oil” or “be appointed” or “be consecrated” or “be given the Holy Spirit.”
- A phrase like “the anointed priest,” could be translated as “the priest who was consecrated with oil” or “the priest who was set apart by the pouring on of oil.”

(See also: [Christ](#), [consecrate](#), [high priest](#), [King of the Jews](#), [priest](#), [prophet](#))

Bible References:

- 1 John 2:20
- 1 John 2:27
- 2 Corinthians 1:21
- 1 Samuel 16:2-3
- Acts 4:27-28
- Amos 6:5-6
- Exodus 29:5-7
- James 5:13-15

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0047, H0430, H1101, H1878, H3323, H4397, H4398, H4473, H4886, H4888, H4899, H5480, H8136, G00320, G02180, G07430, G14720, G20250, G34620, G55450, G55480

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Referenced in: [Numbers 16 General Notes](#)

census

Definition:

The term "census" refers to a formal counting of the number of people in a nation or empire.

- The Old Testament records different times when God ordered that the men of Israel be counted, such as when the Israelites first left Egypt and then again just before they entered Canaan.
- Often the purpose of a census was in order to know how many people should be paying taxes.
- For example, one time in Exodus the Israelite men were counted so that each one would pay a half shekel for taking care of the temple.
- When Jesus was a baby, the Roman government did a census to count all the people who lived throughout their empire, to require them to pay taxes.

Translation Suggestions

- Possible ways to translate this term could include, "name counting" or "list of names" or "enrollment."
- The phrase "take a census" could be translated as "register people's names" or "enroll people" or "write down people's names."

(See also: [nation](#), [Rome](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 5:37
- Exodus 30:12
- Exodus 38:26
- Luke 2:3
- Numbers 4:1-4

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3789, H5674, H5921, H6485, H7218, G05820, G05830

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Referenced in: [Introduction to Numbers](#)

clean, wash

Definition:

The term “clean” generally refers either to removing dirt or stains from someone/something or to not having any dirt or stain in the first place. The term “wash” refers specifically to action of removing dirt or stains from someone/something.

- “Cleanse” is the process of making something “clean.” It could also be translated as “wash” or “purify.”
- In the Old Testament, God told the Israelites which animals he had specified as ritually “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” Only the clean animals were permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice. In this context, the term “clean” means that the animal was acceptable to God for use as a sacrifice.
- A person who had certain skin diseases would be unclean until the skin was healed enough to no longer be contagious. Instructions for cleansing the skin had to be obeyed in order for that person to be declared “clean” again.
- Sometimes “clean” is used figuratively to refer to moral purity, meaning to be “clean” from sin.

In the Bible, the term “unclean” is used figuratively to refer to things that God declared to be unfit for his people to touch, eat, or sacrifice.

- God gave the Israelites instructions about which animals were “clean” and which ones were “unclean.” The unclean animals were not permitted to be used for eating or for sacrifice.
- People with certain skin diseases were said to be “unclean” until they were healed.
- If the Israelites touched something “unclean,” they themselves would be considered unclean for a certain period of time.
- Obeying God’s commands about not touching or eating unclean things kept the Israelites set apart for God’s service.
- This physical and ritual uncleanness was also symbolic of moral uncleanness.
- In another figurative sense, an “unclean spirit” refers to an evil spirit.

Translation Suggestions:

- This term could be translated with the common word for “clean” or “pure” (in the sense of being not dirty).
- Other ways to translate this could include, “ritually clean” or “acceptable to God.”
- “Cleanse” could be translated by “wash” or “purify.”
- Make sure that the words used for “clean” and “cleanse” can also be understood in a figurative sense.
- The term “unclean” could also be translated as “not clean” or “unfit in God’s eyes” or “physically unclean” or “defiled.”
- When referring to a demon as an unclean spirit, “unclean” could be translated as “evil” or “defiled.”
- The translation of this term should allow for spiritual uncleanness. It should be able to refer to anything that God declared as unfit for touching, eating, or sacrifice.

(See also: [defile](#), [demon](#), [holy](#), [sacrifice](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 7:2
- Genesis 7:8
- Deuteronomy 12:15
- Psalms 51:7
- Proverbs 20:30
- Ezekiel 24:13
- Matthew 23:27

- Luke 5:13
- Acts 8:7
- Acts 10:27-29
- Colossians 3:5
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- James 4:8

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1249, H1252, H1305, H2134, H2135, H2141, H2398, H2548, H2834, H2889, H2890, H2891, H2893, H2930, H2931, H2932, H3001, H3722, H5079, H5352, H5355, H5356, H6172, H6565, H6663, H6945, H7137, H8552, H8562, G01670, G01690, G25110, G25120, G25130, G28390, G28400, G33940, G36890

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Referenced in: [Numbers 5 General Notes](#); [Numbers 19 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: [Numbers 13 General Notes](#)

faithful, faithfulness, trustworthy

Definition:

To be “faithful” to God means to consistently live according to God’s teachings. It means to be loyal to him by obeying him. The state or condition of being faithful is “faithfulness.”

- A person who is faithful can be trusted to always keep his promises and to always fulfill his responsibilities to other people.
- A faithful person perseveres in doing a task, even when it is long and difficult.
- Faithfulness to God is the consistent practice of doing what God wants us to do.

Translation Suggestions:

- In many contexts, “faithful” can be translated as “loyal” or “dedicated” or “dependable.”
- In other contexts, “faithful” can be translated by a word or phrase that means “continuing to believe” or “persevering in believing and obeying God.”
- Ways that “faithfulness” could be translated could include “persevering in believing” or “loyalty” or “trustworthiness” or “believing and obeying God.”

(See also: [believe](#), [faith](#), [believe](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 24:49
- Leviticus 26:40
- Numbers 12:7
- Joshua 2:14
- Judges 2:16-17
- 1 Samuel 2:9
- Psalm 12:1
- Proverbs 11:12-13
- Isaiah 1:26
- Jeremiah 9:7-9
- Hosea 5:7
- Luke 12:46
- Luke 16:10
- Colossians 1:7
- 1 Thessalonians 5:24
- 3 John 1:5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **8:5** Even in prison, Joseph remained **faithful** to God, and God blessed him.
- **14:12** Even so, God was still **faithful** to His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- **15:13** The people promised to remain **faithful** to God and follow his laws.
- **17:9** David ruled with justice and **faithfulness** for many years, and God blessed him. However, toward the end of his life he sinned terribly against God.
- **35:12** “The older son said to his father, ‘All these years I have worked **faithfully** for you!’”
- **49:17** But God is **faithful** and says that if you confess your sins, he will forgive you.
- **50:4** “If you remain **faithful** to me to the end, then God will save you.”

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0529, H0530, H0539, H0540, H0571, H0898, H2181, H4603, H4604, H4820, G05690, G05710, G41030

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Referenced in: [Numbers 26 General Notes](#)

firstfruits

Definition:

The term “firstfruits” refers to a portion of the first crop of fruits and vegetables that was reaped during each harvest season.

- The Israelites offered these first fruits to God as a sacrificial offering.
- This term is also used figuratively in the Bible to refer to a firstborn son as being the first fruits of the family. That is, because he was the first son to be born into that family, he was the one who carried on the family name and honor.
- Because Jesus rose from the dead, he is called the “firstfruits” of all believers in him, believers who have died but who will some day come back to life.
- Believers in Jesus are also called the “firstfruits” of all creation, indicating the special privilege and position of those whom Jesus redeemed and called to be his people.

Translation Suggestions:

- The literal use of this term could be translated as “first portion (of crops)” or “first part of the harvest.”
- If possible, the figurative uses should be translated literally, to allow for different meanings in different contexts. This will also show the correlation between the literal meaning and the figurative uses.

(See also: [firstborn](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 31:4-5
- 2 Thessalonians 2:13
- Exodus 23:16-17
- James 1:18
- Jeremiah 2:3
- Psalms 105:36

Word Data:

- Strong's: H1061, H6529, H7225, G05360

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Referenced in: [Numbers 28 General Notes](#)

god, false god, goddess, idol, idolater, idolatrous, idolatry

Definition:

A false god is something that people worship instead of the one true God. The term “goddess” refers specifically to a female false god.

- These false gods or goddesses do not exist. Yahweh is the only God.
- People sometimes make objects into idols to worship as symbols of their false gods.
- In the Bible, God’s people frequently turned away from obeying him in order to worship false gods.
- Demons often deceive people into believing that the false gods and idols they worship have power.
- Baal, Dagon, and Molech were three of the many false gods that were worshiped by people in Bible times.
- Asherah and Artemis (Diana) were two of the goddesses that ancient peoples worshiped.

An idol is an object that people make so they can worship it. Something is described as “idolatrous” if it involves giving honor to something other than the one true God.

- People make idols to represent the false gods that they worship.
- These false gods do not exist; there is no God besides Yahweh.
- Sometimes demons work through an idol to make it seem like it has power, even though it does not.
- Idols are often made of valuable materials like gold, silver, bronze, or expensive wood.
- An “idolatrous kingdom” means a “kingdom of people who worship idols” or a “kingdom of people who worship earthly things.”
- The term “idolatrous figure” is another word for a “carved image” or an “idol.”

Translation Suggestions:

- There may already be a word for “god” or “false god” in the language or in a nearby language.
- The term “idol” could be used to refer to false gods.
- In English, a lower case “g” is used to refer to false gods, and upper case “G” is used to refer to the one true God. Other languages also do that.
- Another option would be to use a completely different word to refer to the false gods.
- Some languages may add a word to specify whether the false god is described as male or female.

(See also: [God](#), [Asherah](#), [Baal](#), [Molech](#), [demon](#), [image](#), [kingdom](#), [worship](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 35:2
- Exodus 32:1
- Psalms 31:6
- Psalms 81:8-10
- Isaiah 44:20
- Acts 7:41
- Acts 7:43
- Acts 15:20
- Acts 19:27
- Romans 2:22
- Galatians 4:8-9
- Galatians 5:19-21
- Colossians 3:5
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **10:2** Through these plagues, God showed Pharaoh that he is more powerful than Pharaoh and all of Egypt's **gods**.
- **13:4** Then God gave them the covenant and said, "I am Yahweh, your God, who saved you from slavery in Egypt. Do not worship other **gods**."
- **14:2** They (Canaanites) worshiped false **gods** and did many evil things.
- **16:1** The Israelites began to worship the Canaanite **gods** instead of Yahweh, the true God.
- **18:13** But most of Judah's kings were evil, corrupt, and they worshiped idols. Some of the kings even sacrificed their children to false **gods**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H0367, H0410, H0426, H0430, H0457, H1322, H1544, H1892, H2553, H3649, H4656, H4906, H5236, H5566, H6089, H6090, H6091, H6456, H6459, H6673, H6736, H6754, H7723, H8163, H8251, H8267, H8441, H8655, G14930, G14940, G14950, G14960, G14970, G22990, G27120

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Referenced in: [Numbers 25 General Notes](#)

grace, gracious

Definition:

The word “grace” refers to help or blessing that is given to someone who has not earned it. The term “gracious” describes someone who shows grace to others.

- God’s grace toward sinful human beings is a gift that is freely given.
- The concept of grace also refers to being kind and forgiving to someone who has done wrong or hurtful things.
- The expression to “find grace” is an expression that means to receive help and mercy from God. Often it includes the meaning that God is pleased with someone and helps him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways that “grace” could be translated include “divine kindness” or “God’s favor” or “God’s kindness and forgiveness for sinners” or “merciful kindness.”
- The term “gracious” could be translated as “full of grace” or “kind” or “merciful” or “mercifully kind.”
- The expression “he found grace in the eyes of God” could be translated as “he received mercy from God” or “God mercifully helped him” or “God showed his favor to him” or “God was pleased with him and helped him.”

Bible References:

- Acts 4:33
- Acts 6:8
- Acts 14:4
- Colossians 4:6
- Colossians 4:18
- Genesis 43:28-29
- James 4:7
- John 1:16
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 22:20-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2580, H2587, H2589, H2603, H8467, G21430, G54850, G55430

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Referenced in: [Numbers 27 General Notes](#)

inherit, inheritance, heir

Definition:

The term “inherit” refers to receiving something valuable from a parent after a parent dies. The term can also refer to receiving something valuable from some other person because of a special relationship with that person. An “inheritance” is the things that are received, and an “heir” is a person who receives an inheritance.

- A physical inheritance that is received may be money, land, or other kinds of property.
- God promised Abraham and his descendants that they would inherit the land of Canaan, that it would belong to them forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- As always, consider first whether there are already terms in the target language for the concept of an heir or an inheritance, and use those terms.
- Depending on the context, other ways that the term “inherit” could be translated might include “receive” or “possess” or “come into possession of.”
- Ways to translate “inheritance” could include “promised gift” or “secure possession.”
- The term “heir” could be translated with a word or phrase that means “privileged child who receives the father’s possessions.”
- The term “heritage” could be translated as “inherited blessings.”

(See also: [heir](#), [Canaan](#), [Promised Land](#), [possess](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 6:9
- 1 Peter 1:4
- 2 Samuel 21:3
- Acts 7:4-5
- Deuteronomy 20:16
- Galatians 5:21
- Genesis 15:7
- Hebrews 9:15
- Jeremiah 2:7
- Luke 15:11
- Matthew 19:29
- Psalm 79:1

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:6** When Abram arrived in Canaan God said, “Look all around you. I will give to you and your descendants all the land that you can see as an **inheritance**.”
- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to **inherit** eternal life?”
- **35:3** “There was a man who had two sons. The younger son told his father, ‘Father, I want my **inheritance** now!’ So the father divided his property between the two sons.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2490, H2506, H3423, H3425, H4181, H5157, H5159, G28160, G28170, G28190, G28200

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Referenced in: [Numbers 34 General Notes](#); [Numbers 36 General Notes](#)

just, justice, unjust, injustice, justify, justification

Definition:

"Just" and "justice" refer to treating people fairly according to God's laws. Human laws that reflect God's standard of right behavior toward others are also just.

- To be "just" is to act in a fair and right way toward others. It also implies honesty and integrity to do what is morally right in God's eyes.
- To act "justly" means to treat people in a way that is right, good, and proper according to God's laws.
- To receive "justice" means to be treated fairly under the law, either being protected by the law or being punished for breaking the law.
- Sometimes the term "just" has the broader meaning of "righteous" or "following God's laws."

The terms "unjust" and "unjustly" refer to treating people in an unfair and often harmful manner.

- An "injustice" is something bad that is done to someone that the person did not deserve. It refers to treating people unfairly.
- Injustice also means that some people are treated badly while others are treated well.
- Someone who is acting in an unjust way is being "partial" or "prejudiced" because he is not treating people equally.

The terms "justify" and "justification" refer to causing a guilty person to be righteous. Only God can truly justify people.

- When God justifies people, he forgives their sins and makes it as though they have no sin. He justifies sinners who repent and trust in Jesus to save them from their sins.
- "Justification" refers to what God does when he forgives a person's sins and declares that person to be righteous in his sight.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, other ways to translate "just" could include "morally right" or "fair."
- The term "justice" could be translated as "fair treatment" or "deserved consequences."
- To "act justly" could be translated as "treat fairly" or "behave in a just way."
- In some contexts, "just" could be translated as "righteous" or "upright."
- Depending on the context, "unjust" could also be translated as "unfair" or "partial" or "unrighteous."
- The phrase "the unjust" could be translated as "the unjust ones" or "unjust people" or "people who treat others unfairly" or "unrighteous people" or "people who disobey God."
- The term "unjustly" could be translated as "in an unfair manner" or "wrongly" or "unfairly."
- Ways to translate "injustice" could include, "wrong treatment" or "unfair treatment" or "acting unfairly." (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- Other ways to translate "justify" could include "declare (someone) to be righteous" or "cause (someone) to be righteous."
- The term "justification" could be translated as "being declared righteous" or "becoming righteous" or "causing people to be righteous."
- The phrase "resulting in justification" could be translated as "so that God justified many people" or "which resulted in God causing people to be righteous."
- The phrase "for our justification" could be translated as "in order that we could be made righteous by God."

(See also: [forgive](#), [guilt](#), [judge](#), [righteous](#), [righteous](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 44:16
- 1 Chronicles 18:14
- Isaiah 4:3-4
- Jeremiah 22:3
- Ezekiel 18:16-17
- Micah 3:8
- Matthew 5:43-45
- Matthew 11:19
- Matthew 23:23-24
- Luke 18:3
- Luke 18:8
- Luke 18:13-14
- Luke 21:20-22
- Luke 23:41
- Acts 13:38-39
- Acts 28:4
- Romans 4:1-3
- Galatians 3:6-9
- Galatians 3:11
- Galatians 5:3-4
- Titus 3:6-7
- Hebrews 6:10
- James 2:24
- Revelation 15:3-4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **17:9** David ruled with **justice** and faithfulness for many years, and God blessed him.
- **18:13** Some of these kings (of Judah) were good men who ruled **justly** and worshiped God.
- **19:16** They (the prophets) all told the people to stop worshiping idols and to start showing **justice** and mercy to others.
- **50:17** Jesus will rule his kingdom with peace and **justice**, and he will be with his people forever.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H2555, H3477, H4941, H5765, H5766, H5767, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6666, H8003, H8264, H8636, G00910, G00930, G00940, G13420, G13440, G13450, G13460, G13470, G17380

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Referenced in: [Numbers 31 General Notes](#)

Passover

Facts:

The "Passover" is the name of a religious festival that the Jews celebrate every year, to remember how God rescued their ancestors, the Israelites, from slavery in Egypt.

- The name of this festival comes from the fact that God "passed over" the houses of the Israelites and did not kill their sons when he killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians.
- The Passover celebration includes a special meal of a perfect lamb that they have killed and roasted, as well as bread made without yeast. These foods remind them of the meal that the Israelites ate the night before they escaped from Egypt.
- God told the Israelites to eat this meal every year in order to remember and celebrate how God "passed over" their houses and how he set them free from slavery in Egypt.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "Passover" could be translated by combining the words "pass" and "over" or another combination of words that has this meaning.
- It is helpful if the name of this festival has a clear connection to the words used to explain what the angel of the Lord did in passing by the houses of the Israelites and sparing their sons.

Bible References:

- 1 Corinthians 5:7
- 2 Chronicles 30:13-15
- 2 Kings 23:23
- Deuteronomy 16:2
- Exodus 12:26-28
- Ezra 6:21-22
- John 13:1
- Joshua 5:10-11
- Leviticus 23:4-6
- Numbers 9:3

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **12:14** God commanded the Israelites to remember his victory over the Egyptians and their deliverance from slavery by celebrating the **Passover** every year.
- **38:1** Every year, the Jews celebrated the **Passover**. This was a celebration of how God had saved their ancestors from slavery in Egypt many centuries earlier.
- **38:4** Jesus celebrated the **Passover** with his disciples.
- **48:9** When God saw the blood, he passed over their houses and did not kill their firstborn sons. This event is called the **Passover**.
- **48:10** Jesus is our **Passover** Lamb. He was perfect and sinless and was killed at the time of the **Passover** celebration.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H6453, G39570

Referenced in: [Numbers 9 General Notes](#)

priest, priesthood

Definition:

In the Bible, a priest was someone who was chosen to offer sacrifices to God on behalf of God's people. The "priesthood" was the name for the office or condition of being a priest.

- In the Old Testament, God chose Aaron and his descendants to be his priests for the people of Israel.
- The "priesthood" was a right and a responsibility that was passed down from father to son in the Levite clan.
- The Israelite priests had the responsibility of offering the people's sacrifices to God, along with other duties in the temple.
- Priests also offered regular prayers to God on behalf of his people and performed other religious rites.
- The priests pronounced formal blessings on people and taught them God's laws.
- In Jesus' time, there were different levels of priests, including the chief priests and the high priest.
- Jesus is our "great high priest" who intercedes for us in God's presence. He offered himself as the ultimate sacrifice for sin. This means that the sacrifices made by human priests are no longer needed.
- In the New Testament, every believer in Jesus is called a "priest" who can come directly to God in prayer to intercede for himself and other people.
- In ancient times, there were also pagan priests who presented offerings to false gods such as Baal.

Translation Suggestions:

- Depending on the context, the term "priest" could be translated as "sacrifice person" or "God's intermediary" or "sacrificial mediator" or "person God appoints to represent him."
- The translation of "priest" should be different from the translation of "mediator."
- Some translations may prefer to always say something like "Israelite priest" or "Jewish priest" or "Yahweh's priest" or "priest of Baal" to make it clear that this does not refer to a modern-day type of priest.
- The term used to translate "priest" should be different from the terms for "chief priest" and "high priest" and "Levite" and "prophet."

(See also: [Aaron](#), [high priest](#), [mediator](#), [sacrifice](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Chronicles 6:41
- Genesis 14:17-18
- Genesis 47:22
- John 1:19-21
- Luke 10:31
- Mark 1:44
- Mark 2:25-26
- Matthew 8:4
- Matthew 12:4
- Micah 3:9-11
- Nehemiah 10:28-29
- Nehemiah 10:34-36
- Revelation 1:6

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **4:7** "Melchizedek, the **priest** of God Most High"

- **13:9** Anyone who disobeyed God's law could bring an animal to the altar in front of the Tent of Meeting as a sacrifice to God. A **priest** would kill the animal and burn it on the altar. The blood of the animal that was sacrificed covered the person's sin and made that person clean in God's sight. God chose Moses' brother, Aaron, and Aaron's descendants to be his **priests**.
- **19:7** So the **priests** of Baal prepared a sacrifice but did not light the fire.
- **21:7** An Israelite **priest** was someone who made sacrifices to God on behalf of the people as a substitute for the punishment of their sins. **Priests** also prayed to God for the people.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H3547, H3548, H3549, H3550, G07480, G07490, G24050, G24060, G24070, G24090, G24200

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Referenced in: [Numbers 3 General Notes](#); [Numbers 18 General Notes](#)

promise, promised

Definition:

When used as a verb, the term “promise” refers to the action of a person saying that he will do something in such way that he obligates himself to fulfill what he has said. When used as a noun, the term “promise” refers to the thing that a person obligates himself to do.

- The Bible records many promises that God has made for his people.
- Promises are an important part of formal agreements such as covenants.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term “promise” could be translated as “commitment” or “assurance” or “guarantee.”
- To “promise to do something” could be translated as “assure someone that you will do something” or “commit to doing something.”

(See also: [covenant](#), [oath](#), [vow](#))

Bible References:

- Galatians 3:15-16
- Genesis 25:31-34
- Hebrews 11:9
- James 1:12
- Numbers 30:2

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, “I **promise** I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are sinful from the time they are children.”[⚡]
- **3:16** God then made the first rainbow as a sign of his **promise**. Every time the rainbow appeared in the sky, God would remember what he **promised** and so would his people.
- **4:8** God spoke to Abram and **promised** again that he would have a son and as many descendants as the stars in the sky. Abram believed God’s **promise**.
- **5:4** “Your wife, Sarai, will have a son—he will be the son of **promise**.”
- **8:15** The covenant **promises** that God gave to Abraham were passed on to Isaac, then to Jacob, and then to Jacob’s twelve sons and their families.
- **17:14** Though David had been unfaithful to God, God was still faithful to his **promises**.
- **50:1** Jesus **promised** he would return at the end of the world. Though he has not yet come back, he will keep his **promise**.

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H0559, H0562, H1696, H8569, G18430, G18600, G18610, G18620, G36700, G42790

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Referenced in: [Numbers 32 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 Numbers](#); [Numbers 26 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

"

Referenced in: [Numbers 20 General Notes](#)

tabernacle

Definition:

The tabernacle was a special tent-like structure where the Israelites worshiped God during the 40 years they traveled around in the desert.

- God had given the Israelites detailed instructions for building this large tent, which had two rooms and was surrounded by an enclosed courtyard.
- Each time the Israelites moved to a different place in the desert to live, the priests would take the tabernacle apart and carry it to their next campsite. Then they would set it up again in the center of their new camp.
- The tabernacle was constructed of wood frames hung with curtains made of cloth, goat hair, and animal skins. The courtyard surrounding it was enclosed with more curtains.
- The two sections of the tabernacle were the Holy Place (where the altar for burning incense was located) and the Most Holy Place (where the ark of the covenant was kept).
- The courtyard of the tabernacle had an altar for burning animal sacrifices and a special washbasin for ritual cleansing.
- The Israelites stopped using the tabernacle when the temple was built in Jerusalem by Solomon.

Translation Suggestions:

- The word “tabernacle” means “dwelling place.” Other ways to translate it could include, “sacred tent” or “tent where God was” or “God’s tent.”
- Make sure that the translation of this term is different from the translation of “temple.”

(See also: [altar](#), [altar of incense](#), [ark of the covenant](#), [temple](#), [tent of meeting](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 21:30
- 2 Chronicles 1:2-5
- Acts 7:43
- Acts 7:45
- Exodus 38:21
- Joshua 22:19-20
- Leviticus 10:16-18

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0168, H4908, H5520, H5521, H5522, H7900, G46330, G46340, G46360, G46380

”

Referenced in: [Numbers 4 General Notes](#); [Numbers 10 General Notes](#)

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