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1 Peter

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unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

1 Peter

Introduction to 1 Peter

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of 1 Peter

Introduction (1:1–2)

Peter reminds the believers of their identity in Christ (1:3–2:10)

- Praise to God for saving the believers (1:3–12)
- Command to be holy (1:13–21)
- Command to love each other as a family (1:22–2:10)

Peter tells the believers how they should behave (2:11–4:11)

- How believers should act toward other people (2:11–3:12)
- How believers should endure suffering (3:13–4:6)
- How believers should act because the end is near (4:7–11)

Peter encourages the believers to persevere when suffering (4:12–5:11)

- How believers should respond to trials (4:12–19)
- How believers should interact with one another (5:1–11)

Conclusion (5:12–14)

Who wrote the book of 1 Peter?

The author identified himself as Peter, who was also called Simon Peter. He was an apostle, and he also wrote the book of 2 Peter. Peter probably wrote this letter in Rome. He wrote the letter to Gentile Christians scattered throughout Asia Minor. (See: **Peter, Simon Peter, Cephas (p.253)**)

What is the book of 1 Peter about?

Peter wrote this letter to encourage Gentile Christians who were being persecuted and to exhort them to stand firm in “the true grace of God” (5:12). Peter told his readers how they should act in the midst of a society that hated them. He encouraged Christians to continue obeying God even when they were suffering. He told them to do this because Jesus would return soon. Peter also instructed Christians about submitting to people in authority over them.

How should the title of this book be translated?

Translators may choose to call this book by its traditional title “1 Peter” or “First Peter,” or they may choose a clearer title, such as “The First Letter from Peter” or “The First Letter Peter Wrote.” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**)

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

How were Christians treated in Rome?

Peter was probably in Rome when he wrote this letter. In [5:13](#) Peter referred to Rome symbolically as “Babylon.” It appears that when Peter wrote this letter, Romans were severely persecuting Christians.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Singular and plural “you”

In this book, the word “I” refers to Peter, except in two places: [1:16](#) and [2:6](#). The word “you” is always plural and refers to Peter’s audience. Sometimes it refers to a specific group of people within Peter’s audience, such as wives, husbands, church leaders, or other groups. These groups are indicated in the notes. (See: **Forms of You (p.176)**)

What are the major issues in the text of the book of 1 Peter?

“Having purified your souls by obedience to the truth for sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from a pure heart” ([1:22](#)). The ULT, UST, and most other modern versions read this way. Some older versions read, “Having purified your souls by obedience to the truth *through the Spirit* for sincere brotherly love, love one another earnestly from the heart.” Translators are advised to follow the modern reading.

(See: **Textual Variants (p.236)**)

1 Peter 1

1 Peter 1 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

Introduction (1:1–2)

Praise to God for saving the believers (1:3–12)

Command to be holy (1:13–21)

Command to love each other as a family (1:22–2:10)

Peter begins this letter in [1:1–2](#) by giving his name, identifying the people to whom he is writing, and offering a greeting. That was the way people typically began letters at that time.

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 that is quoted from the Old Testament in [1:24–25](#).

Special Concepts in this Chapter

What God reveals

When Jesus comes again, everyone will see how good God's people were because they had faith in Jesus. Then God's people will see how gracious God has been to them, and all people will praise both God and his people.

Holiness

God wants his people to be holy because God is holy ([1:15](#)). (See: **holy, holiness, unholy, sacred (p.251)**)

Eternity

Peter tells Christians to live for things that will last forever and not to live for the things of this world, which will end. (See: **eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever (p.246)**)

Other Possible Translation Difficulties in this Chapter

Paradox

A paradox is a true statement that appears to describe something impossible. Peter writes that his readers are glad and sad at the same time ([1:6](#)). He can say this because they are sad because they are suffering, but they are also glad because they know that God will save them "in the last time" ([1:5](#))

1 Peter 1:1

Peter

In this culture, letter writers would give their own names first, and they would refer to themselves in the third person. If that would be confusing in your language, you could use the first person. If your language has a particular way of introducing the author of a letter, you could also use that. Alternate translation: “I, Peter, am writing this letter” or “From Peter” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**)

Peter

Peter is the name of a man, a disciple of Jesus. See the information about him in Part 1 of the Introduction to 1 Peter. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**)

an apostle of Jesus Christ

This phrase gives further information about Simon Peter. He describes himself as being someone given the position and authority of being Christ’s apostle. (See: **Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding (p.161)**) (See: **Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding (p.161)**)

to the elect exiles

In this culture, after giving their own names, letter writers would then state to whom they were writing, naming those people in the third person. If that would be confusing in your language, you could use the second person. Alternate translation: “to you elect exiles” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**)

to the elect exiles of the dispersion

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **elect** and **dispersion**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “to those whom God has elected and exiled among those whom God has dispersed” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

to the elect exiles of the dispersion

When Peter calls his readers **exiles**, he could mean: (1) they are **exiles** because they are far away from their true home in heaven. Alternate translation: “to the elect exiles of the dispersion who are far from their home in heaven” (2) they are **exiles** because they were forced to leave their homes and go far away to Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. Alternate translation: “to you elect exiles of the dispersion who are far away from your homes” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of the dispersion

Here, **dispersion** could refer to: (1) groups of Gentile Christians who were spread throughout the world instead of in their true home in heaven. In this case, **dispersion** would have a similar meaning to **exiles** and would add emphasis. Alternate translation: “among those dispersed outside of their true home in heaven” (2) the groups of Jewish people who were spread across the Greek-speaking world that was outside of the land of Israel, which is the common technical meaning for this word. Alternate translation: “among the dispersed Jews” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia

Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia are names of Roman provinces that were located in what is now the country of Turkey. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**)

1 Peter 1:2

the foreknowledge of God the Father

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **foreknowledge**, you can express the same idea with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “what God the Father foreknew” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

the foreknowledge of God the Father

This phrase could mean: (1) God had determined what would happen ahead of time. Alternate translation: “what God the Father planned previously” (2) God knew what would happen ahead of time. Alternate translation: “what God the Father knew beforehand” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

the Father

Father is an important title for God. (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.241)**) (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.241)**)

by sanctification of the Spirit

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sanctification**, you can express the same idea with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “by the Spirit sanctifying you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

by sanctification of the Spirit

Peter is using the possessive form to describe **sanctification** that is produced by the Holy **Spirit**. If this is not clear in your language, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “by the Spirit causing you to be sanctified” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

for obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ

Here, **obedience** could refer to: (1) obeying God. Alternate translation: “for obedience of God and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ” (2) obeying Jesus Christ. Alternate translation: “for obedience of Jesus Christ and the sprinkling of his blood” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

for obedience

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **obedience**, you can express the same idea with a verbal phrase. Alternate translation: “for you to obey” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

for obedience

Here, **for** introduces a purpose clause. Peter is stating a purpose for which the Holy Spirit sanctifies believers. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “for the purpose of obedience” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**) (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**)

the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ

Peter uses **sprinkling** figuratively to refer to believers being in a covenant relationship with God. Just as Moses sprinkled blood on the people of Israel in [Exodus 24:1-11](#) to symbolize that they were joining in a covenant relationship with God, believers are joined in a covenant relationship with God by means of Jesus' death. Moses also sprinkled blood on the priests to set them apart to serve God as priests ([Leviticus 8:30](#)). If your readers would not understand this, you could use a simile or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the covenant between believers and God established by the blood of Jesus Christ" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of the blood of Jesus Christ

Here, **blood** refers figuratively to the death of Jesus. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "of the blood, the symbol of the death of Jesus Christ" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

Grace and peace be multiplied to you

In this culture, letter writers would offer a good wish for the recipient before introducing the main business of the letter. Use a form in your language that makes it clear that this is a greeting and blessing. Alternate translation: "May God increase his kind acts to you and make you more peaceful" (See: **Blessings (p.141)**) (See: **Blessings (p.141)**)

Grace and peace be multiplied to you

If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the abstract nouns **grace** and **peace** by stating the ideas behind them with equivalent expressions. Alternate translation: "May God multiply his kind acts to you and give you a more peaceful spirit" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

Grace and peace be multiplied to you

Peter speaks of **grace** and **peace** figuratively as if they were objects that could increase in size or number. If this is confusing in your language, you can use a different metaphor that means that these things will increase, or use plain language. Alternate translation: "May grace and peace increase in your lives" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

Grace and peace be multiplied 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: "May God multiply grace and peace to you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 1:3

General Information:

General Information:

Peter begins to talk about the believers' salvation and faith. [Verses 3-5](#) are one sentence, but you may need to divide them into shorter sentences in your language.

Blessed {is

Peter is using a statement to give an exhortation. If this is confusing in your language, you can use a more natural form for exhortation. Alternate translation: "Let us bless" or "Let us praise" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p. 228)**) (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**)

Father

Father is an important title for God. (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.241)**) (See: **Translating Son and Father (p.241)**)

our & us

The words **our** and **us** are inclusive. They refer to Peter and those believers to whom he is writing. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.172)**) (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.172)**)

of our Lord

Peter is using the possessive form to describe Jesus as the **Lord** who rules over those who believe in him. If this is not clear in your language, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "of the person who is lord over us," or "of the person who rules over us," (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

according to his great mercy

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **mercy**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "according to his great merciful character" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

who, & caused us to be born again

The phrase **born again** is a metaphor that refers to spiritual rebirth. Since this is an important metaphor in the Bible, you should keep it in your translation and include an explanation if necessary. Alternate translation: "has caused us to be spiritually reborn" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

who, & caused us to be born again into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from dead ones

The clause **into a living hope** is parallel to “into an imperishable and undefiled and unfading inheritance” in the next verse. If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of the phrases in this verse in order to show that parallel structure. Alternate translation: “who has caused us to be born again through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from dead ones into a living hope” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

into a living hope

Here, **into** introduces a purpose clause. Peter is stating a purpose for which God causes believers to be born again. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “for the purpose of giving us a living hope” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**) (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**)

into a living hope

Peter uses **living** figuratively to describe **hope** that is certain and will not lead to disappointment. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “into a hope that will not disappoint you” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from dead ones

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **resurrection**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “through Jesus Christ being resurrected from among dead ones” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 1:4

into an imperishable and undefiled and unfading inheritance

Here, **into** introduces a purpose clause. Peter is stating a second purpose for which God causes believers to be born again. This clause states what the “living hope” in the previous verse is. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “for the purpose of giving us an imperishable and undefiled and unfading inheritance” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**) (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**)

into an imperishable and undefiled and unfading inheritance

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea behind the word **inheritance**, you can express the same idea with a verb. Alternate translation: “into what we will inherit that is imperishable and undefiled and unfading” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

an imperishable and undefiled and unfading inheritance

Peter uses **inheritance** figuratively to refer to what we will receive in heaven. This could refer to: (1) The promise of God that we will live forever with him. Alternate translation: “a sure and unfailing promise the we will live forever with God” (2) future blessings in heaven after this life. Alternate translation: “imperishable and undefiled and unfading blessings” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

having been kept in heaven for 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: “which God has kept in heaven for you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 1:5

the ones being protected by the power of God

If your language does not 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 ones whom God is protecting with his power” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

through faith

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faith**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “by believing in Jesus” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

for a salvation

Here, **for** introduces a purpose clause. Peter is stating a purpose for which God is protecting believers. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “for the purpose of giving us a salvation” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**) (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**)

for a salvation ready to be revealed

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “for the time when God saves you, which is ready to be revealed” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

ready to be revealed

If your language does not 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 God is ready to reveal” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

in the last time

Here, **the last time** refers to “the day of the Lord,” which is the time when Jesus returns to the world to judge everyone and vindicate those who believe in him. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/dayofthelord\]\]](#)) *If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly.* Alternate translation: “in the last time, when Jesus returns and judges everyone” (See: [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-explicit\]\]](#)) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 1:6

In this

Here, **this** could refer to: (1) the “last time” referred to at the end of the previous verse. Alternate translation: “About this last time” (2) everything described in [verses 3-5](#). Alternate translation: “In all of this that I have said” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**) (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**)

In this you greatly rejoice

In here introduces the reason why Peter’s readers rejoice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “On account of this you greatly rejoice” or “Because of this you greatly rejoice” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**) (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**)

if now being necessary, having been distressed

Peter is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Peter is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “if now it is necessary, and it is, to have been distressed” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.148)**) (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.148)**)

if now being necessary, having been distressed a little {while} in various trials

If your language does not 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 now it is necessary for various trials to distress you a little while” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 1:7

the genuineness of your faith—and but being tested by fire

Here Peter speaks of **faith** figuratively, as if it were gold that is refined by passing it through **fire**. He also uses **fire** figuratively to refer to the hardships that test how well believers trust in Christ. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “the genuineness of your faith ... but being tested by hardships the way fire tests gold” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

the genuineness of your faith

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **genuineness** and **faith**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “the fact that you genuinely believe” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

so that the genuineness of your faith—more precious than perishing gold, but being tested by fire—might be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “so that the genuineness of your faith might be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; that faith is more precious than the perishing gold, but being tested by fire” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

of your faith—more precious than perishing gold, but being tested by fire

In this clause Peter means that **faith** is more valuable than **gold** because faith lasts forever but gold does not, even if it is refined by someone passing it through **fire**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. It may be helpful to make this a separate sentence. Alternate translation: “of your faith, which is more precious than gold because even gold that is tested by fire can perish, but your faith will not perish” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

might be found to result in praise and glory and honor

If your language does not 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 might result in praise and glory and honor” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

at the revelation of Jesus Christ

Peter assumes that his readers will know that he is referring to the future **revelation of Jesus Christ**, when Jesus returns to earth. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “at the future revelation of Jesus Christ” or “when Jesus Christ reveals himself again in the future” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

at the revelation of Jesus Christ

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **revelation**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "at the time when Jesus Christ is revealed" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 1:8

with joy inexpressible and filled with glory

Here, **inexpressible** and **filled with glory** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how great the joy is. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "with joy so great that words cannot describe it" (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

1 Peter 1:9

receiving for yourselves & salvation

Here Peter speaks figuratively of **salvation** as if it were an object that someone could receive. If this would confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “experiencing ... the salvation” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of your faith

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **faith**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “of you believing in Jesus” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

salvation of your souls

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “God saving your souls” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

salvation of your souls

Here, **souls** refers to the individual Christians to whom Peter is writing this letter. If this might confuse your readers, you could use plain language. Alternate translation: “your salvation” (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**)

1 Peter 1:10

searched and inquired carefully

The phrases **searched** and **inquired carefully** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize how hard the prophets tried to understand this salvation. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “examined very carefully” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

this salvation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “God saving you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

grace for you

Here, **this grace** refers to **this salvation**, mentioned earlier in this verse. If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **grace**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “God being gracious to you by saving you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 1:11

into whom or what time

The word translated **whom** could also be translated “what.” In that case, “what” would refer to the time when salvation would take place and **what time** would then refer to the specific circumstances. However, most translations agree with the ULT’s use of **whom**. Alternate translation: “into what time or what circumstances” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

the Spirit of Christ

Peter is using the possessive form to describe the Holy Spirit as being **the Spirit** that is associated with **Christ**. If this is not clear in your language, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “the Holy Spirit, associated with Christ,” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

testifying beforehand

This could indicate: (1) the time when **the Spirit of Christ was revealing** information to the prophets. Alternate translation: “when testifying beforehand” (2) the means by which **the Spirit of Christ was revealing** information to the prophets. Alternate translation: “by means of testifying beforehand”

about} the sufferings of Christ and the glories after these things

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **sufferings** and **glories**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “about how Christ would suffer, and glorious things would happen afterwards” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 1:12

It was revealed 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: “God revealed to them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

which now were declared to you by the ones who proclaimed the gospel 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: “which those who proclaimed the gospel to you have now declared to you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

by the Holy Spirit having been sent from heaven

This phrase indicates the means by which the evangelists proclaimed the gospel to Peter’s readers. Peter uses **the Holy Spirit** here to refer specifically to the Holy Spirit’s work of giving those evangelists the ability or power to proclaim the gospel effectively. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “by means of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven enabling them to do so” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

having been sent from heaven

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language, as in the UST. (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

into which things

Here, **things** refers to what God had revealed to the prophets and some evangelists had proclaimed to Peter’s readers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “into which things God revealed to the prophets and which were declared to you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

into which things angels desire to look

Peter uses **look** figuratively to refer to getting a clearer understanding of what God has revealed about salvation. This does not mean that the angels do not understand salvation at all. If this might confuse your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “things which angels desire to understand more clearly” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 1:13

Therefore

Therefore here refers back to everything that Peter has written in [verses 1–12](#). If it might be helpful to your readers, you could state this concisely. Alternate translation: “Since all these things I have just written are true” (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases \(p.157\)](#)) (See: [Connecting Words and Phrases \(p.157\)](#))

having girded up the loins of your mind, being sober, hope fully

The clauses **having girded up the loins of your mind** and **being sober** could indicate: (1) two commands in addition to the command to **hope fully** that occurs in the next phrase. Alternate translation: “gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, hope fully” (2) two actions that are means by which Peter wants his readers to obey the command to **hope fully**. Alternate translation: “hope fully, by having girded up the loins of your mind and by being sober” (See: [Statements — Other Uses \(p.228\)](#)) (See: [Statements — Other Uses \(p.228\)](#))

having girded up the loins of your mind

Girding up **the loins** is an idiom that means to prepare to work hard. It comes from the custom of tucking the bottom of one’s robe into a belt around the waist in order to move with ease. If this might confuse your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “having prepared your minds for action” (See: [Idiom \(p.183\)](#)) (See: [Idiom \(p.183\)](#))

being sober

Here Peter uses **sober** figuratively to refer to mental clarity and alertness. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “thinking clearly” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

the grace being brought 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: “the grace God is bringing to you” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#)) (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#))

the grace being brought to you

Here Peter speaks of **grace** as if it were an object that could be brought to people. If this might confuse you readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the grace God is giving to you” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

the grace being brought to you

Here, **the grace** refers to salvation, as it also does in [verse 10](#). If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the gracious salvation being brought to you” (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#)) (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#))

the revelation of Jesus Christ

See how you translated this phrase in [verse 7](#). (See: [Possession \(p.207\)](#)) (See: [Possession \(p.207\)](#))

1 Peter 1:14

As children of obedience

Here Peter uses **children** figuratively to refer to people who love and obey God. The relationship between God and those who love him is like the relationship between a father and his children. Because this is an important concept in the Bible, you should not express the meaning plainly here, but you may use a simile. Alternate translation: "Like children of obedience" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

children of obedience

Peter is using the possessive form to describe **children** who are characterized by **obedience**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use the adjective "obedient" instead of the noun "obedience." Alternate translation: "obedient children" (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

not being conformed to your former desires

Here, **not being conformed to** is an idiom meaning "not letting one's life be controlled by." If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: "not being controlled by your former desires" (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

not being conformed to your former desires

Peter is using a statement to give a command. If this is confusing in your language, you can use a more natural form for a command. Alternate translation: "do not be conformed to your former desires" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**) (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**)

in your ignorance

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **ignorance**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "when you were ignorant" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 1:15

the one having called you

This phrase refers to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "God who called you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

in all your behavior

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **behavior**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "in how you conduct yourselves" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 1:16

it is written

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you must state who did the action, Moses was the author of the quotation that follows. Alternate translation: "Moses had written" (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

it is written

Here Peter uses **it is written** to introduce a quotation from an Old Testament book ([Leviticus 11:44](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Peter is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: "it had been written in the scriptures" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.213)**) (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.213)**)

You will be holy

Peter quotes God using a future statement to give a command. If this is confusing in your language, you can use a more natural form for a command. Alternate translation: "You must be holy" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**) (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**)

because I {am} holy

In this quotation from the Old Testament, **I** refers to God. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "because I, God, am holy" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**)

1 Peter 1:17

if you call

Peter is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Peter is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: “because you call” (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.148)**) (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.148)**)

the one judging impartially

This phrase refers to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “God, who judges impartially” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

during} the time of your sojourn

Here Peter speaks of his readers as if they were people living in a foreign land far away from their homes. Like people living away from home, so are Christians living away from their home in heaven. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “during the time that you are living away from your true home” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 1:18

you have been redeemed not with perishable things, with silver or with gold, from your futile behavior handed down from your fathers

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “you have been redeemed from your futile behavior handed down from your fathers, not with perishable things, with silver or with gold” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

you have been redeemed

If your language does not 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 redeemed you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

from your futile behavior handed down from your fathers

Here, **handed down** figuratively refers to one generation teaching **futile behavior** to another generation, as if that behavior were an object that could be passed by hand from one person to another. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “from your futile behavior taught to you by your fathers” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

from your futile behavior

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **behavior**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “from behaving in futile ways” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

handed down from your fathers

If your language does not 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 your fathers handed down” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 1:19

with the precious blood of Christ

Peter uses **the blood of Christ** figuratively to refer to Jesus' death. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "with Christ's precious death" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

as of an unblemished and spotless lamb

Peter compares Jesus' blood to the blood of the lambs that the Jewish priests sacrificed to God because of the people's sins. The point of this comparison is that Jesus died as a sacrifice so that God would forgive people's sins. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "like that of the unblemished and spotless lambs that the Jewish priests sacrificed to God for sins" (See: **Simile (p.225)**) (See: **Simile (p.225)**)

unblemished and spotless

The words **unblemished** and **spotless** mean basically the same thing. Peter uses this repetition to emphasize that Christ was completely perfect and sinless. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "completely perfect" or "with no imperfections at all" (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

1 Peter 1:20

having been foreknown

If your language does not 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 having foreknown him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

having been foreknown

This phrase could mean: (1) God had determined what Christ would do. Alternate translation: “having been planned previously” (2) God knew what Christ would do ahead of time. Alternate translation: “having been known beforehand,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

before the foundation of the world

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **foundation**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “before God founded the world” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

having been revealed

If your language does not 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 having revealed him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

having been revealed

Here, **having been revealed** refers to the first time Jesus came to the earth. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “having been revealed when he came to earth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

in the last of the times

Here, **the last of the times** refers to the final period of history which began when Jesus came to the earth for the first time. This period will end when Jesus returns to earth. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “in this final time period of history” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 1:21

who has raised him from dead ones

Here, to **raise him** is an idiom for causing someone who has died to become alive again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “who caused him to live again so that he was no longer among the dead people” (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

has given him glory

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “has glorified him” or “has shown that he is glorious” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

your faith and hope are in God

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **faith** and **hope**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “you would believe and hope in God” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 1:22

Having purified your souls

Having purified figuratively refers to being forgiven for sins. In the Bible, sin is often referred to as something that makes people dirty, and the forgiveness for sin is referred to as the removal of that dirt. God is the one who forgives sins and **purifies** those who believe in Jesus. However, here Peter is referring to his readers' responsibility in their salvation, which is the responsibility to repent and believe that the gospel is true. Alternate translation: "Having made your souls spiritually pure" or "Having cleansed your souls from sin" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

souls

See how you translated **souls** in [verse 9](#). (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**)

by the obedience to the truth

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **obedience** and **truth**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: "by obeying what is true" or "by obeying the true information" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

to the truth

Here, **the truth** refers to the true teaching about Jesus, which includes the command to repent and believe the gospel. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "to the true message about Jesus" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

brotherly love

Although **brotherly** is a masculine word, Peter is using the phrase **brotherly love** in a generic sense to refer to the kind of love that all believers should have for other believers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "love for fellow believers" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**) (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**)

love one another earnestly from a pure heart

Peter uses **heart** here figuratively to refer to a person's thoughts or emotions. The word **from** indicates that the **heart** must be the source of the **love** that Peter is telling his readers to have. Therefore, this phrase has a similar meaning to the word "sincere" in the previous clause. If this would confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "love one another earnestly based on sincere thoughts" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

1 Peter 1:23

having been born again

See how you translated **born again** in [verse 3](#). (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

not from perishable seed

The word **seed** usually refers to either the seed of a plant or the sperm cell of a man, which is used to produce a baby. However, here Peter uses **seed** as a metaphor. It could refer to: (1) the **word of God** mentioned later in the verse. In this case, Peter is saying what the **word of God** is not. Alternate translation: “not by means of a human message that can perish” (2) physical human birth, in which case the meaning is similar to the idea expressed in [John 1:13](#). Alternate translation: “not by means of mortal physical birth” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

from imperishable

Peter is leaving out a word that a phrase would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply the word from the previous phrase. Alternate translation: “from imperishable seed” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

the living and enduring word of God

Here Peter uses **word** figuratively to describe the gospel message that came from God and was proclaimed to Peter’s readers by using words. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God’s living and enduring message about Jesus” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

living and enduring

Here, **living** and **enduring** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that God’s word is permanent. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “perpetually enduring” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

1 Peter 1:24

For

For here introduces a quotation of some phrases from an Old Testament book ([Isaiah 40:6–8](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Peter is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “It is as Isaiah wrote in the scriptures” (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#)) (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#))

πᾶσα σὰρξ ὡς χόρτος, καὶ πᾶσα δόξα αὐτῆς ὡς ἄνθος χόρτου. ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσεν,

In these clauses and the first clause of the next verse, Peter quotes parts of [Isaiah 40:6–8](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#)) (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#))

All flesh

Here Peter quotes Isaiah using the term **flesh** figuratively to refer to human beings in general, which are made of flesh. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “All humankind” or “Everyone” (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#)) (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#))

all its glory

Peter quotes Isaiah using **glory** figuratively to refer to whatever is beautiful or magnificent about humankind. If this might confuse your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “everything that is glorious about humankind” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

ἄνθος χόρτου. ἐξηράνθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσεν

Peter quotes Isaiah speaking of **grass** and flowers in general, not of one particular blade of **grass** or one **flower**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: “flowers of grass. Grass dried up, and flowers fell off” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases \(p.177\)](#)) (See: [Generic Noun Phrases \(p.177\)](#))

the flower of the grass

Here Peter quotes Isaiah using the possessive form to describe the **flower** that grows in the **grass**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use state this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the flower that grows in the grass” (See: [Possession \(p.207\)](#)) (See: [Possession \(p.207\)](#))

The grass was dried up

In this clause the prophet Isaiah continues the comparison between humankind and **grass**. Just like **grass** dies quickly, so human beings only live a short time. If this would confuse your readers, you could express this meaning by repeating the simile language from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “Like the grass dries up, so do people die after a short time” (See: [Simile \(p.225\)](#)) (See: [Simile \(p.225\)](#))

the flower fell off

In this clause the prophet Isaiah continues the comparison between the glory of humankind and flowers. Just like a **flower** dies and falls to the ground, so does the beauty of mankind disappear. If this would be misunderstood in your language, you could express this meaning by repeating the simile language from earlier in the verse.

Alternate translation: "like the flower that fell off the plant, so does everything that is glorious about humankind come to an end" (See: **Simile (p.225)**) (See: **Simile (p.225)**)

1 Peter 1:25

but the word of the Lord endures into eternity

This clause completes Peter's quotation of [Isaiah 40:6-8](#) that began in the previous verse. It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this ending by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate the end of a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

the word of the Lord

Peter quotes Isaiah using **word** figuratively to describe all that God has spoken by using words. This general reference to God's word would include what God had said about the Messiah. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the message that comes from the Lord" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

And this is the word

Here Peter uses **word** in the same specific sense as in [verse 23](#). It is not the general meaning of **word** used earlier in the verse. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And this is the message about Jesus" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

the word that has been proclaimed

If your language does not 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 word that we have proclaimed" (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 2

1 Peter 2 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

Command to love each other as a family (1:22–2:10)

How believers should act toward other people (2:11–3:12)

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 2:10 and the poetry that is quoted from the Old Testament in 2:6, 7, 8, and 22.

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Stones

The Bible uses a building made of large stones as a metaphor for the church. Jesus is the cornerstone, which is the most important stone. According to [Ephesians 2:20](#), the apostles and prophets are the foundation, which is the part of the building on which all the other stones rest. In this chapter, Christians are the stones that make up the walls of the building. (See: [\[\[rc:///ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/cornerstone\]\]](#) and [foundation, founder, founded \(p.248\)](#))

Milk and babies

When Peter tells his readers to “long for pure spiritual milk” in [2:2](#), he is using the metaphor of a baby craving his mother’s milk. Peter wants Christians to crave God’s word the same way a baby craves milk. (See: [Metaphor \(p. 194\)](#))

Sheep and shepherds

The Bible often speaks metaphorically of people as sheep because sheep do not see well, do not think well, often walk away from those who care for them, and cannot defend themselves when other animals attack them. In [verse 25](#), Peter alludes to [Isaiah 53:6](#) to describe unbelievers as sheep that wander aimlessly and don’t know where they are going. God’s people are also similar to sheep in that they are weak and do foolish things like rebelling against God. In [verse 25](#), Peter also refers to Jesus as a shepherd who takes care of believers, which is a similar idea to what Jesus said in [John 10:11–18](#). (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/sheep\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/other/shepherd\]\]](#))

1 Peter 2:1

Therefore

Therefore here refers back to everything that Peter has said in the previous paragraph (1:22-25). (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**) (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**)

having put aside all evil and all deceit and hypocrisies and envies and all slanders

This clause indicates a command in addition to the command to “long for pure spiritual milk” that occurs next in the verse. If this is confusing in your language, you can use a more natural form for a command. Alternate translation: “put aside all evil and all deceit and hypocrisies and envies and all slanders” (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**) (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**)

having put aside all evil and all deceit and hypocrisies and envies and all slanders

Peter speaks of these sinful actions figuratively as if they were objects that people could **put aside** the way people remove dirty clothing. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “having stopped being evil or being deceptive or being hypocritical or being envious or speaking slander” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

having put aside all evil and all deceit and hypocrisies and envies and all slanders

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil**, **deceit**, **hypocrisies**, **envies**, or **slanders**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “having put aside every kind of evil and all deceitful, hypocritical, deceptive, and slanderous acts” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 2:2

as newborn babies, long for the pure rational milk

The point of this comparison is that Peter wanted his readers to desire knowledge of God's word just as **newborn babies** desire milk. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could use an equivalent comparison or express this meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternate translation: "Just as babies long for their mother's milk, so you must long for the pure rational milk" (See: **Simile (p.225)**) (See: **Simile (p.225)**)

long for

Alternate translation: "desire intensely" or "yearn for"

the pure rational milk

The word translated as **rational** could also be translated "pertaining to the word"; it refers to the word of God. Peter speaks figuratively of the word of God as if it were **rational milk** that nourishes children. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God's pure word" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

you may grow up

Peter speaks figuratively of believers advancing in the knowledge of God and faithfulness to him as if they were children growing up. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you may mature in your faith" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

to salvation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "until you are saved" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

to salvation

Here, **salvation** refers to when Jesus returns and God completes the **salvation** of his people. Peter also uses this meaning for **salvation** in 1:5. See how you translated **salvation** there. Alternate translation: "until God saves you completely" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 2:3

if you have tasted

Peter is speaking as if this were a hypothetical possibility, but he means that it is actually true. If your language does not state something as a condition if it is certain or true, and if your readers might misunderstand and think that what Peter is saying is not certain, then you can translate his words as an affirmative statement. Alternate translation: "since you have tasted" (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.148)**) (See: **Connect — Factual Conditions (p.148)**)

if you have tasted

Peter uses **tasted** figuratively to refer to personally experiencing something. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if you have experienced" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

you have tasted that the Lord {is} kind

This clause is a paraphrase of [Psalm 34:8](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

1 Peter 2:4

coming to him

Here, **coming** could indicate: (1) a factual statement, as in the UST. (2) a command, in which case “being built up” in the next verse would also be a command. Alternate translation: “Come to him” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

to him

The pronoun **him** refers to Jesus, who is called “Lord” in the previous verse. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “to Jesus” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**) (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**)

coming to him, a living stone

Peter refers to Jesus figuratively as if he were a **stone** in a building. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or with a simile. Alternate translation: “coming to him, who is like a living stone in a building” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

a living stone

Peters speaks of a **stone** figuratively as if it were **living**. This could refer to: (1) a stone that is alive. This interpretation emphasizes the fact that Jesus is alive even though he had died. Alternate translation: “a stone that lives” (2) a stone that gives life. This interpretation emphasizes the fact that Jesus gives eternal life to everyone who believes in him. Alternate translation: “a stone that gives eternal life to others” (See: **Personification (p.205)**) (See: **Personification (p.205)**)

having been rejected by men

If your language does not 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: “one that men have rejected” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

by men

Although the term **men** is masculine, Peter is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “by people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**) (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**)

but chosen by God

If your language does not 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 that God has chosen” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 2:5

you yourselves, like living stones, are being built up {to be} a spiritual house

Peter uses **stones** figuratively to refer to his readers, people who believe in Jesus. Just as people in the Old Testament used **stones** to build the temple that God dwelled in, God is using believers to bring together a group of people in whom he will dwell. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you, like stones that are put together and built into a house, are living stones that are being brought together into a spiritual community in which God dwells" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

yourselves, like living stones

Peters uses **stones** figuratively as if they were **living**. This emphasizes the fact that Peter's readers have eternal life because they believe in Jesus. In this verse, **living** cannot mean to give life, because only God can give life. Alternate translation: "like stones that live" (See: **Simile (p.225)**) (See: **Simile (p.225)**)

you & are being built up {to be} a spiritual house

If your language does not 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 God is building up as a spiritual house" (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

you & are being built up {to be}

Here, **are being built up** could indicate: (1) a factual statement, as in the UST. (2) a command, in which case "coming to him" in the previous verse would also be a command. Alternate translation: "be built up" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

for a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices

Here Peter speaks of believers figuratively as if they were part of a **priesthood** and as if their good deeds and acts of worship were **sacrifices** offered to God. Just as the priests in the Old Testament offered sacrifices to God, so should believers do good deeds and worship God. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or with a synonym. Alternate translation: "like the holy priesthood that offered sacrifices to God, so you are made into a group which does good spiritual deeds" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

for a holy priesthood

The word **priesthood** is a singular noun that refers to a group of priests. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use a different expression. Alternate translation: "a group of holy priests" (See: **Collective Nouns (p.143)**) (See: **Collective Nouns (p.143)**)

spiritual sacrifices acceptable

This could mean: (1) the **sacrifices** are of a spiritual, rather than physical, nature. Alternate translation: "the sacrifices of a spiritual nature that are acceptable" (2) the **sacrifices** are offered by the power of the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: "the sacrifices offered by the power of the Holy Spirit, which are acceptable" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 2:6

it stands in scripture

Here the quotation of **scripture** that occurs next in the verse is spoken of as if it were a person who **stands**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “it is written in scripture” (See: **Personification (p.205)**) (See: **Personification (p.205)**)

it stands in scripture

This phrase introduces a quotation of an Old Testament book ([Isaiah 28:16](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Peter is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “what Isaiah wrote in scripture stands” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.213)**) (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.213)**)

Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone, chosen, precious. And the one believing in him may certainly not be ashamed

This sentence is a quotation from [Isaiah 28:16](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

Behold

Peter quotes Isaiah using **Behold** to call his readers to pay attention to what he is about to say. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use here. (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

I am laying

In this quotation from the Old Testament, **I** refers to God. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “I, God, lay” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**)

a stone, a cornerstone

Here God refers to the Messiah figuratively as if he were not only a **stone**, but even the most important **stone** in a building, the **cornerstone**. If this might confuse your readers, you could use a simile or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “someone who is like the most important stone in a building” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

a stone, a cornerstone, chosen, precious

Here, **chosen** and **precious** show a distinction between this **cornerstone** and any other **cornerstone**. If this is not understood in your language, you could make the relationship between these phrases more clear. Alternate translation: “a cornerstone that is chosen and precious” (See: **Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding (p.161)**) (See: **Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding (p.161)**)

certainly not

The phrase **certainly not** translates two negative words in Greek. God uses them together to emphasize the truth of this statement. If your language can use two negatives together for emphasis without them cancelling each other to create a positive meaning, it would be appropriate to use that construction here. (See: **Double Negatives (p.164)**) (See: **Double Negatives (p.164)**)

1 Peter 2:7

the honor {is

Here, **this honor** refers to the statement in the previous verse that people who believe in Jesus will “certainly not be ashamed.” If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “this honor of never being ashamed is” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

the honor {is

The phrase translated **this honor** could also be translated as “precious,” in which case it would refer to the “cornerstone” in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “he is precious” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

But to those not believing

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “But to those who do not believe, God says in the scriptures” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

A stone that the ones building rejected, this has become the head of the corner

This sentence is a quotation from [Psalm 118:22](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

A stone that the ones building rejected

The author uses **stone** figuratively to refer to the Messiah, and he uses **builders** figuratively to refer to those who **rejected** Jesus. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “The Messiah who was rejected just like builders reject a stone” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

the head of the corner

This phrase has the same meaning as “cornerstone” in the previous verse. It refers to the most important stone in a building. Here it refers specifically to the Messiah. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the Messiah, who is like a cornerstone” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 2:8

and

Here, **and** introduces a quotation of an Old Testament book ([Isaiah 8:14](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Peter is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “and Isaiah wrote in the scriptures” (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#)) (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#))

A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense

This sentence is a quotation from [Isaiah 8:14](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#)) (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#))

A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense

Peter quotes Isaiah speaking figuratively of the Messiah as if he were a **stone** or **rock** that people tripped over. Peter means that many people would be offended by Jesus’ teachings and reject him. If your readers would not understand this, you could use a simile or express the meaning in a non-figurative way. Alternative translation: “He is like a stone of stumbling and like a rock of offense” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense

Peter quotes Isaiah using the possessive form twice in this sentence to describe a **stone** that causes **stumbling** and a **rock** that causes **offense**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “A stone that makes people stumble and a rock that makes people feel offended” (See: [Possession \(p.207\)](#)) (See: [Possession \(p.207\)](#))

A stone of stumbling and a rock of offense

These two phrases mean almost the same thing. Isaiah says the same thing twice, in slightly different ways, to emphasize that people will be offended by this **stone**. If stating the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you could combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: “a stone or a rock over which people will surely stumble” (See: [Parallelism \(p.202\)](#)) (See: [Parallelism \(p.202\)](#))

the word

Here, **the word** refers to the gospel message, which includes the command to repent and believe the gospel. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the message about Jesus” (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#)) (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#))

They stumble

Here, **stumble** could refer to: (1) being offended by the gospel, which is the meaning in the rest of this verse. Alternate translation: “They get offended” (2) being judged for rejecting the gospel. Alternate translation: “They are judged” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

They stumble, disobeying the word

Here, **disobeying the word** indicates the reason why they **stumble**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: "They stumble because they disobey the word" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**) (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**)

disobeying the word

Here, **disobeying** refers to **disobeying** the command to repent and believe the gospel, which is part of the gospel message. Therefore, this **disobeying** means refusing to believe the gospel. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "refusing to believe the word" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

to which also they were 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: "to which God also appointed them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

to which

Here, **which** refers back to the previous part of this sentence. Those who do not believe in Jesus were appointed to stumble and disobey the word. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "To this, stumbling and disobeying the word," (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 2:9

a chosen family, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for possession

All four of these phrases are quotations from the Old Testament. The phrase **a chosen people** is from [Isaiah 43:20](#), **a royal priesthood** and **a holy nation** are from [Exodus 19:6](#), and **a people for possession** is from [Isaiah 43:21](#). It may be helpful for your readers to indicate these quotations with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate quotations. (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#)) (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#))

a chosen family

If your language does not 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 family whom God has chosen” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#)) (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#))

a royal priesthood

This could refer to: (1) members of a priesthood who are also members of the king’s family. Alternate translation: “a kingly priesthood” (2) a priesthood which serves the king. Alternate translation: “a priesthood which serves the king” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.138\)](#)) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.138\)](#))

a royal priesthood

The word **priesthood** is a singular noun that refers to a group of priests. If your language does not use singular nouns in that way, you can use a different expression. Alternate translation: “a group of royal priests” (See: [Collective Nouns \(p.143\)](#)) (See: [Collective Nouns \(p.143\)](#))

a people for possession

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **possession**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “a people for God to possess” (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.133\)](#)) (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.133\)](#))

of the one having called you out from darkness into his marvelous light

This clause refers to God. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “of God, who called you from darkness into his marvelous light” (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.138\)](#)) (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.138\)](#))

out from darkness into his marvelous light

Here, **darkness** refers figuratively to the condition of people who do not know God and are sinful, and **light** refers figuratively to the condition of people who know God and are righteous. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use similes. Alternate translation: “from a life of sin and ignorance of God to a life of knowing and pleasing him” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

1 Peter 2:10

not a people," & a people of God;" & not having received mercy," & having received mercy

All four of these phrases are quotations from the Old Testament ([Hosea 1:6-10](#)). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate these quotations with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate quotations. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

1 Peter 2:11

General Information:

General Information:

Peter begins to tell his readers how to live Christian lives.

foreigners and exiles

Here, **foreigners** and **exiles** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that Christians on this earth are far away from their home in heaven. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “true exiles” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

foreigners

Peter uses **foreigners** here figuratively to refer to his Christian readers. Just like a foreigner is not in his homeland, so are Christians not at home while living on the earth. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “those living away from their home in heaven” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

exiles

See how you translated **exiles** in 1:1. (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

to abstain from fleshly desires

Here, **fleshly** refers figuratively to a person’s sinful nature. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to abstain from satisfying your sinful desires” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

make war against the soul

Peter speaks of **fleshly desires** figuratively as if they were soldiers trying to destroy the spiritual life of believers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “will destroy your spiritual life” (See: **Personification (p.205)**) (See: **Personification (p.205)**)

the soul

Peter is referring to each individual Christian to whom he is writing this letter, not one particular **soul**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: “your souls” or “you” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.177)**) (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.177)**)

1 Peter 2:12

keeping your behavior among the Gentiles good

Peter is using a statement to give a command. If this is confusing in your language, you can use a more natural form for command, starting a new sentence. Alternate translation: "Keep your behavior among the Gentiles good" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**) (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.228)**)

keeping your behavior among the Gentiles good

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **behavior**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "behaving well among the Gentiles" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

among the Gentiles

Peter uses **Gentiles** here figuratively to refer to people who are not Christians. Just like a **Gentile** was not a member of the Jewish people, so people who are not Christians are not members of God's people. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "among those who do not believe in Jesus" or "among those who are not Christians" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

in whatever they slander you as

Alternate translation: "with regard to what they slander you for as " or "with respect to the very things that they slander you for as"

by observing your good works

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **works**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "they may observe the good things that you do" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

in the day of visitation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **visitation**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "on the day when he visits" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

in the day of visitation

This phrase is an idiom that refers to the time when God will judge all people. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "on the day when he comes to judge everyone" (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

1 Peter 2:13

for the sake of the Lord

Here, **the Lord** refers to Jesus. This phrase could mean: (1) we should do this to follow the example of Jesus, who also obeyed human authorities. Alternate translation: “in order to follow the Lord’s example” (2) we should do this to honor Jesus. Alternate translation: “in order to honor the Lord” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

to a king as one having supreme authority

Alternate translation: “to the king as the highest human authority” or “to the king, who has supreme human authority”

1 Peter 2:14

to governors as those being sent through him

Alternate translation: “to governors, who have been sent through him”

those being sent through 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 the king has sent” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

those being sent through him

Here, **him** could refer to: (1) the king mentioned in the previous verse, as in the UST. (2) God, who is the one who installs and removes all governing authorities. Alternate translation: “those being sent by God” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**) (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**)

for punishment of evildoers and praise of doers of good

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **punishment** and **praise**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “to punish evildoers and praise those who do good” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 2:15

doing good to silence the ignorance of the foolish people

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “to silence the ignorance of foolish people by doing good” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

doing good to silence the ignorance of the foolish people

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **ignorance**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “doing good to silence the ignorant things that foolish people are saying” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 2:16

as free {people

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. These words could be: (1) the command to submit to authorities stated in [verse 13](#). Alternate translation: “submit as free people” (2) an implied imperative verb. Alternate translation: “act as free people” or “live as free people” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

as a covering of evil

Here, **covering** could refer to: (1) something to prevent people from knowing about one's evil deeds. Alternate translation: “as a way to prevent others from seeing your evil” (2) an excuse or pretext to do evil deeds. Alternate translation: “as an excuse to do evil” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 2:17

the brotherhood

Here, **brotherhood** refers to all Christian believers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the community of believers” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 2:18

General Information:

General Information:

Peter begins to speak specifically to people who were slaves who worked in people's houses.

to the good and gentle ones

The words **good** and **gentle** mean similar things. Peter uses this repetition to emphasize that such masters treat their servants very kindly. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "to the very kind ones" (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

to the crooked ones

Here, **crooked ones** is used figuratively to refer to people who act dishonestly or unjustly as if their morals were an object that could be bent or twisted. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to the dishonest ones" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 2:19

this {finds} favor

Peter assumes that his readers will know that he is referring to finding **favor** with God, which is what he states in the next verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “this is deserving of God’s favor” or “this is pleasing to God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

because of consciousness of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **consciousness**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “because one is aware of God” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

because of consciousness of God

Peter is using the possessive form to describe **consciousness** that is about or concerning **God**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “because of having consciousness about God” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

of God

Here, **God** refers to who **God** is and what he requires from his people. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “because of consciousness of who God is and what he requires” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 2:20

For what credit {is there} if, sinning and being beaten, you will endure

Peter is not asking for information, but is using the question form here to emphasize that there is nothing praiseworthy about suffering for doing something wrong. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate this sentence as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "For there is no credit if, sinning and being beaten, you will endure." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.221)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.221)**)

being beaten

If your language does not 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 beats you" or "your master beats you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

doing good and suffering

This could mean: (1) someone suffers even though that person did what is good. Alternate translation: "suffering despite doing good" (2) someone suffers because that person did what is good. Alternate translation: "suffering because of doing good" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**) (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**)

this {finds} favor with God

See how you translated a similar phrase in the previous verse.

1 Peter 2:21

to this

Here, **this** refers back to what Peter stated at the end of the previous verse. Believers are called by God to endure suffering while doing what is good. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “to endure suffering when you have done what is good” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

to this you were 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: “God has called you to this” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

you might follow in his footsteps

Peter uses **follow in his footsteps** figuratively to refer to following Jesus’ example about enduring suffering. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you might imitate his behavior” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 2:22

who did no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth

This verse is a quotation from [Isaiah 53:9](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#)) (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#))

neither was deceit found in his mouth

If your language does not 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: “neither did anyone find deceit in his mouth” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#)) (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#))

neither was deceit found in his mouth

Peter quotes Isaiah referring to **deceit** figuratively as if it were an object that could be found inside someone’s mouth. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “neither was deceit spoken out of his mouth” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

neither was deceit found in his mouth

Peter quotes Isaiah figuratively describing something the Messiah would say by association with **his mouth**, which he would use to say something. In this case it is something the Messiah did not say. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “neither did he say something deceitful” (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#)) (See: [Metonymy \(p.200\)](#))

1 Peter 2:23

who being reviled, did not revile back

If your language does not 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 people reviled, did not revile them back” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

he entrusted {himself} to the one judging justly

Here, **the one who judges justly** refers to God. This means that Jesus trusted God to punish those who reviled him or to prove that he was innocent. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “he entrusted himself to God, who judges justly” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 2:24

who himself bore our sins

Peter uses the word **himself** here to emphasize that Jesus alone is the one who bore our sins. Use a way that is natural in your language to indicate this emphasis. Alternate translation: “none other than Jesus bore our sins” or “Jesus, that very person, bore our sins” (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.218)**) (See: **Reflexive Pronouns (p.218)**)

bore our sins in his body on the tree

Peter uses **bore our sins** figuratively to refer to Jesus being punished for **our sins** as if **sins** were an object that he carried on **his body**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “suffered the punishment for our sins in his body on the tree” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

the tree

Peter uses **tree** figuratively to refer to the cross on which Jesus died, which was made of wood. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language, as in the UST. (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

having died to the sins

Here, **having died to sins** is a metaphor that means to no longer be controlled by sin. Like a dead person is free from sinning because they are no longer alive, so believers are free to stop sinning because Jesus bore the punishment for their sins. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “being no longer controlled by sin” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

having died to the sins

This clause refers to an event that occurs before the event in the next clause. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could show this relationship by using a fuller phrase. Alternate translation: “after having died to sins” (See: **Connect — Sequential Time Relationship (p.155)**) (See: **Connect — Sequential Time Relationship (p.155)**)

we might live for righteousness

When Peter says **we**, he is speaking of himself and other believers in Christ, so **we** would be inclusive. Your language may require you to mark this form. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.172)**) (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.172)**)

by whose wounds you were healed

This clause is a quotation from [Isaiah 53:5](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

by whose wounds you were healed

If your language does not 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 healed you by means of his wounds" (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

by whose wounds

Here, **wounds** figuratively refers to all the suffering Jesus endured when he was beaten and killed on the cross. If our readers would misunderstand this, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "by whose suffering and death" (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**)

you were healed

Here, **healed** could mean: (1) being freed from the penalty and power of sin, which could include physical healing. Alternate translation: "you were freed from the effects of sin" (2) being forgiven for their sins and having a restored relationship with God. Alternate translation: "you were forgiven" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 2:25

you were like straying sheep

Peter speaks figuratively about his readers before they believed in Christ as if they had been similar to lost sheep that were wandering around aimlessly. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you were living aimlessly without knowing God” (See: **Simile (p.225)**) (See: **Simile (p.225)**)

you have been turned back

If your language does not 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 turned you back” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

the shepherd and overseer of your souls

Peter uses **shepherd** and **overseer** figuratively to refer to Jesus. Just as a **shepherd** protects his sheep and an **overseer** takes care of his workers, Jesus protects and takes care of those who trust in him. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the one who protects and takes care of your souls” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of your souls

See how you translated **souls** in 1:9. (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**)

1 Peter 3

1 Peter 3 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

How believers should act toward other people (2:11–3:12)

How believers should endure suffering (3:13–4:6)

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 that is quoted from the Old Testament in [verses 10–12](#).

Other Possible Translation Difficulties in this Chapter

“the spirits in prison”

[Verse 19](#) states that Jesus went and proclaimed to “the spirits in prison,” but does not mention what Jesus proclaimed or who those spirits are. [Verse 20](#) states that these spirits disobeyed God during the time of Noah. Many scholars think that this means one of the following three meanings, each of which will be discussed in the notes for [verses 19](#) and [20](#): (1) The spirits are demons who were imprisoned by God because they did something evil during Noah’s time (see [2 Peter 2:4–5](#); [Jude 6–7](#); [Genesis 6:1–4](#)). [Verse 19](#) then means that Jesus went to the place where they are imprisoned and proclaimed his victory to them at some time between his death on the cross and his return to heaven. (2) The spirits are sinful human beings who died during the flood in Noah’s time, and the prison is the realm of the dead. [Verse 19](#) then means that Jesus went to hell and proclaimed his victory to those dead people there at some time between his death and resurrection. (3) The spirits are sinful human beings who died during the flood in Noah’s time, but [verse 19](#) refers to the pre-incarnate form of Jesus indirectly preaching the gospel to them through the preaching of Noah.

“Baptism now saves you”

In [verse 20](#) Peter refers to the story of God rescuing Noah and his family from the flood “through water.” Then in [verse 21](#) he states that the water is an “antitype” for baptism, which is a Christian ritual by which a person publicly identifies as a Christian. Then Peter makes the statement that baptism “now saves you.” Since the New Testament authors repeatedly state that God alone saves people and that no one can do any work to be saved, Peter’s statement cannot mean that a person can be saved by being baptized. Rather, Peter uses the word “baptism” figuratively to refer to the faith in Jesus that a person publicly confesses when that person is baptized. Peter indicates later in [verse 21](#) that he is not referring to water baptism, which he describes as “the removal of dirt from the flesh.” Peter further states that the baptism he is referring to saves “through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,” which means that a person is saved by faith in Jesus, because Jesus rose from the dead.

1 Peter 3:1

General Information:

General Information:

In [verses 1–6](#) Peter gives instructions specifically to women who are wives.

some are being disobedient to the word

Here, **being disobedient to the word** could refer to: (1) refusing to believe the gospel message, as in [2:8](#). Alternate translation: “some do not believe the message about Jesus” (2) disobeying the commands God gave in his word. Alternate translation: “some do not obey what God commands in his word” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

they will be won

If your language does not 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 win them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

they will be won

Here, **won** is an idiom that means that the unbelieving husbands will become believers in Jesus. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “they will be persuaded to believe in Christ” (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

without a word

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “without you saying a word.” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

without a word

Here, **word** refers to anything the wives might say to their husbands about the gospel message. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “without a word about the gospel” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

1 Peter 3:2

having observed

This phrase indicates the reason why the unbelieving husbands would become believers in Jesus. These husbands became believers because they **observed** how their wives behaved. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “because they observed” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**) (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**)

your pure behavior with fear

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **behavior**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “you behave purely and with fear” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

your pure behavior

This could refer to: (1) the wives' sincere and honest behavior. Alternate translation: “your sincere behavior” (2) the wives' sexually chaste behavior. Alternate translation: “your sexually chaste behavior” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 3:3

whose

Here, **whose** refers to the Christian wives to whom Peter is speaking. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “your” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**) (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**)

whose adornment

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **adornment**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “they way you adorn yourselves” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 3:4

but the hidden man of the heart

If it would be helpful in your language, you could begin this verse as a new sentence. If you do so, then you will need to repeat the subject and verb from the previous verse. Alternate translation: “Rather, let your adornment be the inner man of the heart” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.146)**) (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.146)**)

the hidden man of the heart

Here, **hidden man** and **heart** both refer to a person’s thoughts or emotions. If this would confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the inner thoughts” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

the hidden man of the heart

Peter is using the possessive form to indicate that the **hidden man** is the same thing as **the heart**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “the hidden man, which is the heart” or “the hidden man, namely, the heart” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

in the imperishable thing of the gentle and quiet spirit

Peter is using the possessive form to indicate that the **imperishable thing** is the same thing as **a gentle and quiet spirit**. If this is not clear in your language, you could use express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “in the imperishable thing, which is a gentle and quiet spirit” or “in the imperishable thing, namely, a gentle and quiet spirit” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

of the gentle and quiet spirit

Here, **quiet** means “peaceful” or “calm.” It does not mean the opposite of loud. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “of a gentle and peaceful spirit” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

of the gentle and quiet spirit

Here, **spirit** refers to a person’s attitude or temperament. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “of a gentle and quiet attitude.” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

which is very precious before God

Peter refers to God’s opinion figuratively as if it were a person standing directly in front of him. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “which God considers to be very precious” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 3:5

adorned themselves

Peter speaks figuratively of the attitude of the holy women as if it were something with which they **adorned themselves**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternative translation: "made themselves beautiful" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

being subjected to their own husbands

See how you translated the similar clause in [verse 1](#).

1 Peter 3:6

Sarah & Abraham

Sarah is the name of a woman and **Abraham** is the name of her husband. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**)

whose children you have become

Peter uses a Hebrew idiom here in which people are said to be the **children** of someone who has qualities similar to theirs. Women who believe and who act like Sarah acted are thought of as if they were her actual **children**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “who resemble her as if you were her children” (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

not being afraid of any terror

The phrase **not being afraid of any** translates two negative words in Greek. Peter uses them together to emphasize that believing women should not fear anything at all. If your language can use two negatives together for emphasis without them cancelling each other to create a positive meaning, it would be appropriate to use that construction here. (See: **Double Negatives (p.164)**) (See: **Double Negatives (p.164)**)

1 Peter 3:7

General Information:

General Information:

In this verse Peter gives instructions specifically to men who are husbands.

live with the female

Here, **the female** refers to the wives of the men to whom Peter is writing, not to one particular woman. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: “live with the women whom you have married” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.177)**) (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.177)**)

according to knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “in a knowledgeable way” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

as with a weaker container

Here Peter refers to women figuratively as if they were **weaker** containers. The word **container** is a term used to refer to both men and women in the Bible ([Acts 9:15](#)). Just as clay pots can break easily, so are human beings weak. Here Peter specifically refers to women as **weaker** containers because women are usually physically weaker than men. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “as with someone who is weaker than you are” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

assigning honor as also fellow heirs of the grace of life

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **honor** and **heirs**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “honor them as also those who will inherit with you the grace of life” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

fellow heirs of the grace of life

Peter speaks of **the grace of life** figuratively as if it were something that people inherit. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “those who will experience the grace of life together” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of the grace of life

Peter is using the possessive form to describe **grace** that is **life**. The word **grace** refers to a gracious gift and **life** refers to eternal **life**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “of the gracious gift, namely, eternal life” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

so that your prayers will not be hindered

If your language does not 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 nothing will hinder your prayers” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 3:8

General Information:

General Information:

In [verses 8-12](#) Peter writes instructions to all believers.

be} likeminded

Alternate translation: “have the same opinion and be” or “have the same attitude and be”

loving as brothers

Although **brothers** is masculine, Peter is using the phrase **loving as brothers** in a generic sense to refer to the kind of love that all believers should have for other believers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “loving as fellow believers” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**) (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**)

1 Peter 3:9

not paying back evil in exchange for evil or insult in exchange for insult

Peter uses **paying back** figuratively to refer to responding to the actions of another person as if one was returning money to that person for those actions. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “not doing evil to someone who does evil to you or insulting someone who insults you” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

blessing

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “blessing those who do evil to you or insult you” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

to this you were 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: “God called you to this” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

to this you were called so that

Here, **this** could refer to: (1) **blessing** earlier in the verse. Alternate translation: “you were called to bless so that” (2) **inherit a blessing** later in the verse “to this you were called so that” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

so that you might inherit a blessing

Peter speaks of experiencing God’s **blessing** figuratively as if one is receiving an inheritance. If this might confuse your readers, you could express it plainly. Alternate translation: “so that you might experience God’s blessing as your permanent possession” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 3:10

For

For here introduces a quotation from the Old Testament ([Psalm 34:12–16](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Peter is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “It is as David wrote in the scriptures” (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#)) (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#))

Let the one wanting to love life and to see good days stop

From this clause through to the end of [verse 12](#), Peter quotes from [Psalm 34:12–16](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#)) (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#))

the one wanting to love life and to see good days

These two phrases mean basically the same thing and emphasize the desire to have a good life. If stating the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you could combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: “the one truly wanting to have a good life” (See: [Parallelism \(p.202\)](#)) (See: [Parallelism \(p.202\)](#))

to see good days

Peter quotes David speaking figuratively of experiencing a good lifetime as **seeing good days**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to experience a good lifetime” (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#)) (See: [Metaphor \(p.194\)](#))

his tongue from evil, and his lips not to speak deceit

Peter quotes David using the words **tongue** and **lips** figuratively to refer to the person who is speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression from your culture or plain language. Alternate translation: “himself from speaking evil and from speaking deceit” (See: [Synecdoche \(p.234\)](#)) (See: [Synecdoche \(p.234\)](#))

his tongue from evil, and his lips not to speak deceit

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **evil** and **deceit**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “his tongue from saying evil things and his lips from speaking deceitful things” (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.133\)](#)) (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.133\)](#))

1 Peter 3:11

let him turn away from evil

Here, **turn away from** is a metaphor that means to avoid doing something. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “let him avoid doing evil” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

Let him seek peace and let him pursue it

The phrases **seek peace** and **pursue it** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize the importance of living peacefully with other people. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “Let him earnestly pursue peace” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

Let him seek peace

Here, **peace** refers to peaceful relationships between people. If it might be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Let him seek to live peacefully with others” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 3:12

the eyes of the Lord {are} on righteous ones

Here, **eyes** being **on** someone is an idiom that refers to God acting favorably toward someone by taking care of that person. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a similar idiom in your language. Alternate translation: "The Lord lovingly takes care of the righteous ones" (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

his ears {are} toward their request

Here, **ears** being **toward** someone's **request** is an idiom that refers to God listening to that person's request. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a similar idiom in your language. Alternate translation: "the Lord listens to their request" (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

his ears {are} toward their request

The idea that the Lord listens to the requests of righteous people also implies that he responds to those requests. If this might be helpful to your readers, you could state this explicitly. Alternate translation: "he listens to and grants their request" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

their request

Here, **request** refers to requests in general, not to one particular **request**. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: "their requests" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.177)**) (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.177)**)

but the face of the Lord {is} against

Here, **face** refers figuratively to the Lord himself. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "But the Lord is against" (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**)

but the face of the Lord {is} against

Here, **the face** being **against** someone is an idiom that refers to one person opposing another person. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a similar idiom in your language. Alternate translation: "But the Lord opposes" (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

those doing evil

After this phrase, Peter also ends his quotation from the book of Psalms. If you decided in [verse 10](#) to mark this as a quotation, indicate that ending here with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate the end of a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

1 Peter 3:13

Connecting Statement:

Connecting Statement:

In [verses 13-22](#) Peter teaches the believers how to behave when unbelievers persecute them.

who {is} the one who will harm you if you become zealous ones of the good

Peter is not asking for information, but is using the question form here to emphasize that it is unlikely that someone would harm them if they did good things. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “no one will harm you if you become zealous ones of the good” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.221)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.221)**)

zealous ones of the good

Peter is using the possessive form to describe people who are **zealous** about doing **good** deeds. If this is not clear in your language, you could use a different expression. Alternate translation: “ones zealous to do good deeds” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

1 Peter 3:14

you might suffer because of righteousness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **righteousness**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “you might suffer because you do what is right” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

you are} blessed ones

If your language does not 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 will cause you to be blessed ones” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

But you should not fear the fear of them nor be troubled

This sentence is a quotation from [Isaiah 8:12](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

But you should not fear the fear of them nor be troubled

These two phrases mean the same thing. Peter states the same idea twice in order to emphasize that believers should not be afraid of people who persecute them. If stating the same thing twice might be confusing for your readers, you could combine the phrases into one. Alternate translation: “But you should not fear at all what people might do to you” (See: **Parallelism (p.202)**) (See: **Parallelism (p.202)**)

you should not fear the fear of them

This could refer to: (1) the fear that unbelievers have. Alternate translation: “you should not fear what they fear” or “you should not fear the same things that they fear” (2) the fear that righteous people have for unbelievers. Alternate translation: “you should not fear them” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

1 Peter 3:15

sanctify the Lord Christ in your hearts

Peter uses **sanctify the Lord Christ** figuratively to refer to acknowledging Christ's holiness. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "acknowledge in your hearts that the Lord Christ is holy" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

in your hearts

Here, **hearts** refers to the thoughts or emotions of Peter's readers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "in your minds" or "within yourselves" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

for a defense

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **defense**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "to defend your faith" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

who asks you for a word

Peter uses **word** figuratively to refer to an answer or explanation spoken by using words. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "who asks you for a statement" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

concerning the hope in you

Peter speaks of **hope** figuratively as if it were something that could be inside a person. If this would confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "concerning your hope" or "concerning the hope that you have" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 3:16

with meekness and fear

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **meekness** and **fear**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “by being meek and fearful” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

having a good conscience

This phrase implies not doing anything sinful that would cause a person to not have a **good conscience**. If this might confuse your readers, you could state this explicitly. Alternate translation: “doing nothing wrong” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

so that, in what you are being slandered, the ones reviling your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these clauses. Alternate translation: “so that the ones who are reviling your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed about why you are being slandered” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

you are being slandered

If your language does not 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 are slandering you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

your good behavior in Christ

Here, **in Christ** refers to being a Christian. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “your good behavior as a Christian” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

the ones reviling your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed

If your language does not 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 may shame the ones who are reviling your good behavior in Christ” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 3:17

doing good, & doing evil

These two phrases indicate two different reasons for suffering. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because of doing good ... because of doing evil” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**) (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**)

if the will of God wills

Peter uses **the will of God** figuratively to refer to God himself. If your readers would not understand this, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “if God wills” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

1 Peter 3:18

for sins

Here, **sins** implies the **sins** of people other than Jesus, because Jesus never sinned. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “for the sake of the sins of others” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

having & been killed in flesh

If your language does not 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 having killed him in the flesh” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

having & been killed in flesh

Here, **flesh** refers to Christ’s body, which was made of **flesh**. Peter is saying that the body of Christ was killed. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “having been killed physically” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

having been made alive in spirit

If your language does not 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’s spirit having made him alive” or “God having made him alive in the spirit” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

having been made alive in spirit

Here, **the spirit** could refer to: (1) the Holy Spirit, in which case this phrase would indicate the means by which Jesus was made alive. Alternate translation: “having been made him alive by the Spirit” (2) Jesus’ spiritual existence, in which case this phrase would be referring to the spiritual realm that is in contrast to the physical realm referred to with the phrase “in the flesh.” Alternate translation: “having been made alive spiritually” or “having been made alive in the spiritual realm” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 3:19

in which

Here, **which** refers to “the spirit” in the previous verse. As in the previous verse, this could refer to: (1) the Holy Spirit. Alternate translation: “by means of the Spirit” (2) Jesus’ spiritual existence. Alternate translation: “in the spiritual realm” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

he proclaimed

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a sentence would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. This phrase could mean: (1) Jesus proclaimed God’s victory over sin and death, which he accomplished through his death and resurrection. Alternate translation: “he proclaimed God’s victory” (2) Jesus preached the gospel to wicked people indirectly through the preaching of Noah during the time before the great flood. This interpretation is less likely to be correct, because it would mean that Noah was actually the one preaching and Peter does not mention Noah preaching or Jesus’ pre-incarnate existence anywhere in this letter. Alternate translation: “he preached the gospel” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

to the spirits in prison

Here, **spirits** could refer to: (1) evil spirits whom God imprisoned because of what they did before the flood that occurred in Noah’s time (see [2 Peter 2:4–5](#); [Jude 6–7](#); [Genesis 6:1–4](#)), as in the UST. (2) the spirits of people who died during the flood that occurred in Noah’s time. This interpretation is a less likely to be correct because Peter never refers to people as **spirits**, but rather “souls,” as in the next verse. Alternate translation: “to those people who had died and were in prison” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

in prison

Here Peter uses **prison** as a metaphor. It could refer to: (1) a place where God imprisoned certain evil spirits whom he will judge when he judges the whole world (see [2 Peter 2:4–5](#); [Jude 6–7](#)). Alternate translation: “whom God had imprisoned to await judgment” (2) the place where sinful people go when they die. Alternate translation: “in hell” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 3:20

having disobeyed

Peter is leaving out a word that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply the word from the context. Alternate translation: “having disobeyed God” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

the patience of God

Peter uses **patience of God** figuratively to refer to God himself. If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “God himself” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

in the days of Noah

Here Peter uses **days of Noah** figuratively to refer to the time period when Noah was alive. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in the time of Noah” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

an ark being constructed

If your language does not 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 Noah was constructing an ark” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 3:21

which

Here, **which** refers back to the “water” mentioned at the end of the last verse. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly, as in the UST. (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**) (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**)

which, {being} an antitype, now saves you also, baptism

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: “which, being an antitype for baptism, now saves you also” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

which, {being} an antitype, now saves you also, baptism

Here, **antitype** refers to one thing that is an analogy for another thing. In this context the “water” from the previous verse is an analogy for baptism. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “which is a symbol for baptism, now saves you also” or “which is analogous to baptism, now saves you also” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

baptism

Here Peter uses **baptism** figuratively to refer to the faith in Jesus that believers profess when they are baptized. The Bible clearly states that God saves people by grace through faith, not by any work like baptism ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). See the discussion in the General Notes for this chapter. If this might confuse your readers, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “the faith in Jesus demonstrated by baptism” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

not a removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal of a good conscience to God

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **removal** and **appeal**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “it does not remove dirt from the flesh, but appeals to God for a good conscience” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

from the flesh

Here, Peter uses **flesh** figuratively to refer to a person’s physical body that is made of **flesh**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “from the body” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

an appeal of a good conscience to God

Here the phrase **a good conscience** means Peter’s readers do not feel guilty because they know that God has forgiven their sins. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “an appeal to God to know that your sins have been forgiven” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

now saves you also, baptism—not a removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal of a good conscience to God—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

Here, **through the resurrection of Jesus Christ** indicates the means by which the faith demonstrated by baptism saves. If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases to make that meaning clear. Alternate translation: “baptism now saves you also through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is not a removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

through the resurrection of Jesus Christ

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **resurrection**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “through God raising Jesus Christ from the dead” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 3:22

who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him

The phrases **having gone** and **having been subjected** indicate that those two clauses describe events that occurred before the event in the first clause in this verse. If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these phrases so that they appear in chronological order. Alternate translation: “after having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him, he is at the right hand of God” (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

who is at the right hand of God

Here, Peter uses **right hand** figuratively to refer to the place located at the right side of God in heaven. If this would confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “who is at God’s right side” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

who is at the right hand of God

In this culture, the place at the **right** side of a ruler was a position of honor. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly. Alternate translation: “who is at the place of honor next to God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him

The words **angels**, **authorities**, and **powers** are all terms for the ranks of supernatural beings, both angelic and demonic. If your language does not have three different terms for rulers or authorities, you can combine them. Alternate translation: “all types of supernatural beings having been subjected to him” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected 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: “God having subjected angels and authorities and powers to him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

1 Peter 4

1 Peter 4 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

How believers should endure suffering (3:13–4:6)

How believers should act because the end is near (4:7–11)

How believers should respond to trials (4:12–19)

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 that is quoted from the Old Testament in [verse 18](#).

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Ungodly Gentiles

Although the term “Gentiles” usually refers to people who are not Jewish, in [verse 3](#) Peter uses “Gentiles” to refer to all ungodly people who are not Jews. It does not include Gentiles who have become Christians. Actions like “licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry” were typical of ungodly Gentiles. (See: **godly, godliness, ungodly, godless, ungodliness, godlessness (p.249)**)

Other Possible Translation Difficulties in this Chapter

“Let him” and “Let those”

In [verses 16–19](#) Peter uses these phrases to tell his readers what he wants them to do. Although they are commands that he wants his readers to obey, it is as if he were telling one person what he wants other people to do. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate these as commands, like the UST does.

1 Peter 4:1

Therefore

Therefore here refers back to what Peter has said about Jesus' suffering in 3:18. If it might help your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Considering what I have written about Christ's suffering" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.157)**) (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.157)**)

in the flesh, & in the flesh

Here, **flesh** refers to the human body, which is made of flesh. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "in the body ... in the body" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

arm yourselves {with} the same way of thinking

Here Peter uses **arm yourselves** figuratively to refer to preparing one's mind for something. As soldiers get their weapons ready for battle, so should Christians be mentally prepared to suffer for their faith. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "prepare your minds with the same way of thinking" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

with} the same way of thinking

Here Peter uses **the same way of thinking** to refer to Jesus' **way of thinking** when he suffered. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: "with the same way of thinking about suffering that Christ had when he suffered" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

has ceased from sin

Here, **ceased from sin** means "no longer living with a sinful mindset." The idea is that suffering because of one's faith indicates that a person is not living sinfully. Christians are often persecuted by unbelievers because they refuse to act sinfully. This phrase does not mean that Christians who suffer never sin. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: "has stopped living sinfully" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 4:2

in order to

Here, **in order to** introduces a purpose clause. This could mean: (1) this verse states the purpose for ceasing from sin mentioned at the end of the previous verse. Alternate translation (without a comma preceding): “so that he will” (2) this verse states the purpose for the command to “arm yourselves” in the previous verse. Alternate translation (starting a new sentence): “Arm yourselves in order to” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**) (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**)

the remaining time in the flesh

Peter uses **time in the flesh** figuratively to refer to a person’s lifetime. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the remaining time of your life” or “the rest of your life” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

for the desires of men

Here, **desires** refers specifically to sinful **desires**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “for the sinful desires of men” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

for the desires of men

Although the term **men** is masculine, Peter is using the word here in a generic sense to refer to humans in general. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “for human desires” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**) (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**)

1 Peter 4:3

the time having passed {is} enough

Alternate translation: "enough time has passed"

the will of the Gentiles

Here Peter uses **Gentiles** figuratively to refer to sinful people who do not know God. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. See the discussion of this term in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: "the will of those people who do not know God" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

having lived in licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry

Peter speaks of these different sins figuratively as if they were places that his readers had formerly **lived in**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "having practiced licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

having lived in licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, drinking parties, and lawless idolatry

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **licentiousness, lusts, drunkenness, carousing, and idolatry**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: "having lived licentious and lustful lives, getting drunk, attending immoral parties and drinking parties, and worshipping prohibited idols" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 4:4

you are not running with {them} into the same outpouring of recklessness

Peter uses **running into** figuratively to refer to being eager to participate in sinful acts with unbelievers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you are not eagerly joining them to participate in the same outpouring of recklessness” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

outpouring of recklessness

Peter uses **outpouring** figuratively to refer to acting sinfully to such a high degree that it is as if sin were pouring out of the person like a flood. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “abundant acts of recklessness” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of recklessness

The word **recklessness** refers to dangerous behavior that shows that a person does not care about the consequences of his actions. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “of careless sinning” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 4:5

they will give a word

Here Peter uses **give** figuratively to refer to speaking something. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they will speak a word" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

they will give a word

Here Peter uses **word** figuratively to refer to an explanation that they would speak using words. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they will give an account" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

to the one being ready to judge

Here, **the one who is ready to judge** could refer to: (1) God. Alternate translation: "to God, who is ready to judge" (2) Christ. Alternate translation: "to Christ, who is ready to judge" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

those living and dead ones

The phrase **living and dead ones** refers to all people, whether they are still alive or have died. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "everyone" (See: **Merism (p.192)**) (See: **Merism (p.192)**)

1 Peter 4:6

the gospel was preached also to dead ones

Here, **dead ones** refers to people who heard the gospel while they were alive but had died by the time Peter wrote this letter. Some people believe that this clause means that Jesus went to hell and preached the gospel to people who had died before Jesus himself died on the cross. However, that idea would contradict the statement in [Hebrews 9:27](#) that “men are appointed to die once, and after that, the judgment.” The Bible does not state that God gave anyone a second chance to believe in Jesus after they had already died. If this use of **dead ones** might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: “the gospel was preached also to those who have since died” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

the gospel was preached

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. This could mean: (1) people preached the gospel. Alternate translation: “people preached the gospel” (2) Christ preached the gospel. Alternate translation: “Christ preached the gospel” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

they might be judged & in the flesh according to men

If your language does not use the passive form in this way, you can state this in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. This could mean: (1) men judged and persecuted them during their lives according to human standards. Alternate translation: “men judged them in the flesh by human standards” (2) God judged them as humans during their lives. Alternate translation: “God judged them in the flesh as humans” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

according to men

Although the term **men** is masculine, Peter is using the word here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. Alternate translation: “according to people” or “as people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**) (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**)

in the flesh

Here Peter uses **in the flesh** figuratively to refer to a person’s lifetime. See how you translated this expression in [verse 2](#). (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

they might live

Here, **live** refers to experiencing eternal life. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they might experience eternal life” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

they might live in the spirit

Here, **the spirit** could refer to: (1) the Holy Spirit, in which case this phrase would indicate the means by which the people received eternal life. Alternate translation: “they might live by the Spirit” (2) their spiritual existence, in which case this phrase would be referring to the spiritual realm that is contrasted with the physical realm mentioned

earlier in the verse with the phrase “in the flesh.” Alternate translation: “they might live spiritually” or “they might live in the spiritual realm” See how you translated the same expression in [3:18](#). (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 4:7

the end of all things

Here, **the end of all things** refers to the end of the world, when Jesus returns and judges everyone. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the end of the world, when Jesus returns,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

has come near

Peter uses **has come near** figuratively to refer to something that will happen soon. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “will soon happen” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

be of sound mind, and be sober

The words translated as **sound mind** and **sober** mean basically the same thing. Peter uses them to emphasize the need to think clearly since the end of the world is near. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “be completely clearheaded” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

be sober

See how you translated **sober** in 1:13. (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

for prayers

Here, **for** introduces a purpose clause. Peter is stating a purpose for his readers to think clearly. Use a natural way in your language for introducing a purpose clause. Alternate translation: “for the purpose of praying prayers” (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**) (See: **Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship (p.150)**)

1 Peter 4:8

for love covers up a multitude of sins

Peter describes **love** figuratively as if it were a person who could cover something up, and he describes **sins** figuratively as if they were objects that could be covered up. This clause, **covers up**, means that people who love others will forgive them for the sins that they commit against them. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use similes. Alternate translation: “for those who love forgive the many sins committed against them by others” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 4:9

be} hospitable ones

The word **hospitable** refers to showing kindness to and providing for the needs of guests and travelers. This was especially important in Peter's time because inns were dangerous places where people did many immoral activities, so Christians could not stay in them. If it might be helpful to your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "be those who provide food and a sleeping place" or "be those who provide room and board" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

without complaining

Here Peter uses a figure of speech that expresses a strong positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of the intended meaning. If this is confusing in your language, you can express the meaning positively. Alternate translation: "with cheerfulness" (See: **Litotes (p.190)**) (See: **Litotes (p.190)**)

1 Peter 4:10

just as each one has received a gift

Here, **gift** refers to special spiritual abilities that God gives to believers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "just as each one has received a special spiritual ability from God" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

as good stewards of the diverse grace of God

Peter uses **stewards** figuratively to refer to Christians using spiritual abilities from God to serve other believers as if they were managing resources for a boss. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: "as those managing well the diverse grace of God" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

of the diverse grace of God

Peter is using the possessive form to describe **grace** that is given by God. The word **grace** refers to the various spiritual gifts that God graciously gives believers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "of the diverse, gracious gifts from God" (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

1 Peter 4:11

If anyone speaks—as {with} words of God

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “if anyone speaks, let him speak as if he is speaking the words of God” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

if anyone serves—as from strength that God supplies

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “if anyone serves others, let him serve others as if he were serving them with the strength that God supplies” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

God might be glorified

If your language does not 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 might glorify God” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

to whom is the glory and the power

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **glory** and **power**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “may he be recognized as glorious and powerful” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 4:12

the fiery trial among you

Peter refers to suffering Christians as if they were gold being refined by being passed through a fire. In the same way that fire refines gold, trials test and strengthen a Christian's faith. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or with a simile. Alternate translation: "the trial you are experiencing that is refining you like gold is refined in fire" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 4:13

at the revelation of his glory

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **revelation** and **glory**, you can express the same ideas in another way. This phrase could mean: (1) Christ will reveal his own glory. Alternate translation: “when he reveals how glorious he is” (2) God will reveal Christ’s glory. Alternate translation: “when God reveals how glorious Christ is” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

at the revelation of his glory

Here, **the revelation of his glory** refers to the time in the future when Jesus returns to earth and judges everyone. If this might be helpful to your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “at the revelation of his glory when he returns to earth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

you may rejoice, being glad

The words **rejoice** and **glad** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize the intensity of joy. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “you may rejoice even more” or “you may be exceedingly glad” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

1 Peter 4:14

If you are reviled

If your language does not 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 people revile you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

for the name of Christ

Here, **name** refers to Christ himself. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “for Christ” (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

you are} blessed ones

If your language does not 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 are people whom God has blessed” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

the Spirit of glory and of God

Here, **of glory** and **of God** both refer to the Holy Spirit. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “the Spirit of glory, who is the Spirit of God” or “the glorious Holy Spirit of God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

rests on you

Here, **rests on you** is an idiom that refers to the Holy Spirit continually dwelling within Christians. Peter borrowed this language from [Isaiah 11:2](#) where it originally referred to the Holy Spirit dwelling in the Messiah. The Holy Spirit dwells in the Messiah as well as in those who believe in the Messiah ([John 1:33](#); [14:16-17](#)). The Holy Spirit who dwells within believers provides strength and comfort when believers are persecuted for their faith. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “is staying with you” or “remains within you” (See: **Idiom (p.183)**) (See: **Idiom (p.183)**)

1 Peter 4:15

as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **murderer**, **thief**, **evildoer**, and **meddler**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: "as someone who murders, steals, does evil, or as someone who meddles" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

a meddler

Here, **meddler** refers to a person who gets involved with the affairs of others without having a right to do so. Alternate translation: "someone who needlessly meddles in the affairs of other people" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.238)**) (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.238)**)

1 Peter 4:16

let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God

Peter is addressing his readers indirectly by using the third person. If this might be confusing in your language, you could use the second person, as the previous verse does. See the discussion of this in the General Notes for this chapter. Alternate translation: “do not be ashamed, but glorify God” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p. 174)**) (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.174)**)

in this name

Here, **this name** refers to the title “Christian” mentioned earlier in the verse. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “because he bears the name ‘Christian’” or “because people have recognized him as a Christian” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 4:17

it is} the time to begin the judgment with the household of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgment**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "it is time for God to begin judging the household of God" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

the household of God

Here Peter uses **household** figuratively to refer to all believers as if they were a family that belongs to God. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "those who belong to God" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

but if first with us

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the the previous clause. Alternate translation: "but if it is time for judgment to begin first with us" (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

with us

When Peter says **us**, he is speaking of himself and his readers, so **us** would be inclusive. Your language may require you to mark these forms. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.172)**) (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.172)**)

what {will be} the end of the ones disobeying the gospel of God

Peter is not asking for information, but is using the question form here to emphasize that God's judgment will be more severe for people who reject the gospel than for those who believe it. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "how terrible will be the end of the ones disobeying the gospel of God!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.221)**) (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.221)**)

the end

Here, **end** refers to the final result of the lives of people who do not believe in Jesus. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning explicitly. Alternate translation: "the final result" or "the outcome" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

of the ones disobeying

Here, **disobeying** refers to disobeying the command to repent and believe the gospel, which is part of the gospel message. See how you translated a similar phrase in [2:8](#). Alternate translation: "of the ones refusing to believe" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

the gospel of God

Here, **the gospel of God** could refer to: (1) the gospel that came from God. Alternate translation: “the gospel from God” (2) the gospel that is about God. Alternate translation: “the gospel about God” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

1 Peter 4:18

And

And here introduces a quotation from an Old Testament book ([Proverbs 11:31](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Peter is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “And Solomon wrote in the Scriptures” (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#)) (See: [Quotations and Quote Margins \(p.213\)](#))

If with difficulty the righteous is being saved, where will the ungodly and sinner appear

This sentence is a quotation from [Proverbs 11:31](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#)) (See: [Quote Markings \(p.215\)](#))

If with difficulty the righteous is being saved

If your language does not 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 with difficulty God is saving the righteous one” (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#)) (See: [Active or Passive \(p.135\)](#))

the righteous & the ungodly and sinner

Peter is speaking of these types of people in general, and not of specific, individual people. If this would be misunderstood in your language, use a more natural phrase. Alternate translation: “righteous ones ... ungodly and sinful ones” (See: [Generic Noun Phrases \(p.177\)](#)) (See: [Generic Noun Phrases \(p.177\)](#))

where will the ungodly and sinner appear

Peter is not asking for information, but is using the question form here to emphasize that ungodly people will suffer much more than believers do. If you would not use a rhetorical question for this purpose in your language, you could translate his words as a statement or an exclamation and communicate the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “the ungodly and sinner will surely not appear!” (See: [Rhetorical Question \(p.221\)](#)) (See: [Rhetorical Question \(p.221\)](#))

where will the ungodly and sinner appear

Here, the combination of **where will** and **appear** is an idiom meaning “what will happen.” If your readers would not understand this, you could use an equivalent idiom or use plain language. Alternate translation: “what will happen to the ungodly and the sinner” (See: [Idiom \(p.183\)](#)) (See: [Idiom \(p.183\)](#))

the ungodly and sinner

The words **ungodly** and **sinner** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize the wickedness of these people. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “the ungodly sinners” (See: [Doublet \(p.167\)](#)) (See: [Doublet \(p.167\)](#))

1 Peter 4:19

souls

See how you translated **souls** in [1:9](#). (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**) (See: **Synecdoche (p.234)**)

in doing good

Alternate translation: “while doing good” or “while continuing to do good deeds”

1 Peter 5

1 Peter 5 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

How believers should interact with one another (5:1–11)

Conclusion (5:12–14)

Special Concepts in this Chapter

Lion

Other animals are usually afraid of lions because they are fast and strong, and they eat almost every other kind of animal. They also eat people. Satan wants to make God's people afraid, so Peter uses the simile of a lion to teach his readers that Satan can harm their bodies, but if they trust in God and obey him, they will always be God's people, and God will care for them. (See: **Simile (p.225)**)

Babylon

Babylon was the evil nation that had destroyed Jerusalem, taken the Jews away from their homes, and ruled over them. In other places in Scripture, the authors use Babylon as a metaphor for the enemies of God's people. In [verse 13](#) Peter uses Babylon as a metaphor for the nation that was persecuting the Christians to whom he was writing. Most scholars believe that here Peter is referring to Rome because the Romans were severely persecuting Christians there at that time. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/evil\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://ta/man/translate/figs-metaphor\]\]](#))

1 Peter 5:1

General Information:

General Information:

In [verses 1–4](#) Peter speaks directly to men who are leaders in the churches.

the fellow elder & the elders

In [verses 1–5](#) the words **elder** and **elders** refer specifically to church leaders, who were often older men. Here these words do not refer to old men in general. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the fellow church leader ... the church leaders” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

witness of the sufferings of Christ

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **witness** and **sufferings**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “one who has witnessed Christ suffer in many ways” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

of the glory being about to be revealed

If your language does not 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: “in the glory that God is about to reveal” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

of the glory

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “in the glorious nature of Christ” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

of the glory being about to be revealed

The phrase **the glory that is about to be revealed** refers to Christ’s glorious return to earth in the future. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in the glory that is about to be revealed when Christ returns” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

1 Peter 5:2

Shepherd the flock of God

Here Peter uses **Shepherd** figuratively to refer to leading and taking care of believers, and he uses **flock** figuratively to refer to those believers. Elders who lead assemblies of believers should take care of those believers like shepherds take care of their sheep. Since the shepherd and sheep metaphors are important metaphors in the Bible, you should keep the metaphors in your translation or use similes. Alternate translation: “Take care of God’s people as if they were a flock of sheep” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

exercising oversight—not under compulsion

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **oversight** and **compulsion**, you can express the same ideas in another way. Alternate translation: “supervising—not because you must do so” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

exercising oversight—not under compulsion

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “exercising oversight over them—not doing this under compulsion” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

not under compulsion, but willingly

The phrases **not under compulsion** and **willingly** mean the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that Peter wants church leaders to voluntarily take care of believers. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “with complete willingness” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

according to God

This phrase refers to acting according to God’s will or requirements. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “according to God’s will” or “as God wants you to” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

and not greedily, but eagerly

The phrases **not greedily** and **eagerly** mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that Peter wants church leaders to eagerly take care of believers. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “with complete eagerness” (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

1 Peter 5:3

as lording it over

Here Peter uses **lording it over** figuratively to refer to acting toward people in a harsh and controlling manner, as if someone were a harsh master who abuses his servants. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly or use a simile. Alternate translation: “harshly controlling” or “acting like harsh masters over” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

your portion

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **portion**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “those who are assigned to you” or “those whom God has apportioned to you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

being examples to the flock

Peter is using the possessive form to describe **examples** that are for **the flock**. If this is not clear in your language, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “being examples for the flock” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

to the flock

See how you translated **flock** in the previous verse. (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 5:4

And

And here indicates that what follows is the result of obeying the commands that Peter gave in [verses 2–3](#). Use a natural way in your language for introducing a result clause. Alternate translation: “As a result of doing these things” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**) (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.153)**)

the Chief Shepherd

Chief Shepherd is a title for Jesus. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “Jesus, the Chief Shepherd” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

the Chief Shepherd

Here Peter speaks of Jesus figuratively as if he were a **shepherd** who has authority over all the leaders of the assemblies of believers. Peter told those leaders to shepherd their flocks in [verse 2](#). Since **Chief Shepherd** is an important title for Jesus that connects to some prophecies about the Messiah in the Old Testament, you should keep the metaphor in your translation or use a simile. Alternate translation: “the one who is like a lead shepherd” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

when the Chief Shepherd has been revealed

If your language does not 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 the Chief Shepherd appears” or “when God reveals the Chief Shepherd” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

the unfading crown of glory

Here, **crown** refers to a symbol of victory. It does not refer to the type of **crown** that kings wear. In ancient times an athlete would receive this **crown** as a reward for winning a competition. Those crowns were often made of leaves or flowers that would fade. Unlike those victory crowns, the reward that God gives will be **unfading**, which means that it will last forever. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “a glorious reward that will last forever” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

crown of glory

This could refer to: (1) a **crown** that is characterized by **glory**. Alternate translation: “glorious crown” (2) a **crown** that is the **glory** referred to in [verse 1](#). Alternate translation: “crown, that is, glory” (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

1 Peter 5:5

General Information:

General Information:

In this verse Peter first instructs younger men specifically and then continues to instruct all of the believers.

be subjected

If your language does not 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: “subject yourselves” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

to elders

See how you translated **elders** in [verse 1](#). (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

everyone

Here, **everyone** refers to all the believers to whom Peter is writing this letter, and not to all people. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: “every one of you believers” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

clothe yourselves {with} humility

Peter speaks of **humility** figuratively as if it were a piece of clothing that a person could put on. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “act with humility” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

with} humility

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **humility**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “with humble actions” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

for

Here, **for** introduces a quotation from the Old Testament ([Proverbs 3:34](#)). If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a comparable phrase that indicates that Peter is quoting from an important text. Alternate translation: “for it is as Solomon wrote in the Scriptures” (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.213)**) (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.213)**)

God resists proud ones, but gives grace to humble ones

This sentence is a quotation from [Proverbs 3:34](#). It may be helpful to your readers to indicate this by setting off all of this material with quotation marks or with whatever punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate a quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**) (See: **Quote Markings (p.215)**)

gives grace

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **grace**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “acts graciously” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 5:6

under the powerful hand of God

Peter uses **hand** figuratively to refer to God's power to save humble people and punish proud people. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "under God's great power" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

he may lift you up

Peter is using a spatial metaphor to describe God honoring someone as if God would **lift** that person **up**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God may show honor to you" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 5:7

having cast all your anxiety on him

Here Peter speaks of **anxiety** figuratively as if it were a heavy burden that a person can take off of his back and **cast** onto God. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “trusting him with everything that worries you” or “letting him take care of all the things that trouble you” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

1 Peter 5:8

Be sober, be watchful

The words translated as **sober** and **watchful** mean basically the same thing. Peter uses them to emphasize that believers need to be alert since the devil wants to destroy them. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "Be completely alert" (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

Be sober

See how you translated **sober** in [1:13](#). (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

is walking around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour

Peter speaks of **the devil** figuratively as if he were a **roaring lion** who wants to **devour** people. Just as a hungry lion devours its prey, the devil is **seeking** to destroy the faith of believers. See the discussion of this in the General Notes for this chapter. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "is trying to find ways to destroy the faith of believers" (See: **Simile (p.225)**) (See: **Simile (p.225)**)

1 Peter 5:9

firm in the faith

Peter is leaving out some of the words that a clause would need in many languages to be complete. If your readers might misunderstand this, you could supply these words from the context. Alternate translation: “being firm in the faith” (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**) (See: **Ellipsis (p.169)**)

in the faith

Here, **the faith** could refer to: (1) a person’s trust in Jesus. Alternate translation: “in the faith that you have” (2) the Christian faith in general. Alternate translation: “in the Christian faith” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

the same kind of sufferings are being brought to completion

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **sufferings**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “that people are suffering in the same ways” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

the same kind of sufferings are being brought to completion

If your language does not 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 same kind of sufferings are occurring” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

in your brotherhood

See how you translated **brotherhood** in [2:17](#). (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

in the world

Alternate translation: “in various places throughout the world”

1 Peter 5:10

But the God of all grace, the one having called you to his eternal glory in Christ, having suffered for a little {while

If it would be more natural in your language, you could change the order of these clauses so that they appear in chronological order. Alternate translation: "But after having suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, the one who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ" (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**) (See: **Information Structure (p.188)**)

the God of all grace

God of all grace could mean: (1) God is always gracious. Alternate translation: "the God who is always gracious" (2) God always give gracious gifts, as mentioned in 4:10. Alternate translation: "the God who gives all gracious gifts" (See: **Possession (p.207)**) (See: **Possession (p.207)**)

to his eternal glory

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **glory**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "to his glorious presence forever" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

in Christ

Here, **in Christ** refers to being united with Christ through faith in him. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: "in union with Christ" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

for a little {while

Alternate translation: "for a short time"

will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, {and} establish

Here, **confirm**, **strengthen**, and **establish** all mean basically the same thing. The repetition is used to emphasize that God will fully strengthen people who suffer because they trust in Jesus. If your language does not use repetition to do this, you can use one phrase and provide emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "will himself restore and thoroughly strengthen in every way" (See: **Doublet (p.167)**) (See: **Doublet (p.167)**)

1 Peter 5:11

To him {be} the power

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **power**, you can express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "May he rule powerfully" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**) (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.133)**)

1 Peter 5:12

Through Silvanus, the faithful brother, as I regard {him}, I wrote to you briefly

Through Silvanus means that Silvanus wrote down the words that Peter told him to write in this letter. In ancient times it was common for people to use scribes to write down letters for them. If this might confuse your readers, you could express it explicitly. Alternate translation: "I wrote to you briefly by means of Silvanus, the faithful brother, as I regard him, who wrote down what I told him to write" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)

brother

Although **brother** is masculine and Silvanus is a man, here Peter is using **brother** in a generic sense to refer to another believer. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "fellow Christian" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**) (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.243)**)

this

Here, **this** refers back to what Peter has written in this letter, especially the gospel message that the letter contains. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: "what I have written to you" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**) (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**)

this to be the true grace of God

Here the word **grace** refers to the gospel message, which tells of the kind things that God has done for believers. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "this letter I have written contains God's true and gracious message" (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**) (See: **Metonymy (p.200)**)

Stand in it

Peter uses **Stand** figuratively to refer to being strongly committed to something as if someone is standing firmly in one place and refusing to move. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Remain strongly committed to it" (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

Stand in it

Here, **it** refers to **the true grace of God** mentioned earlier in the verse. If this might confuse your readers, you could express this explicitly. Alternate translation: "Stand in this true grace" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**) (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.211)**)

1 Peter 5:13

She {who is} in Babylon, fellow-elect one

She and **fellow-elect one** here both refer to the group of believers who were with Peter when he wrote this letter. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “This group of believers in Babylon, who are fellow-elect ones” (See: **Symbolic Language (p.232)**) (See: **Symbolic Language (p.232)**)

in Babylon

Here, **Babylon** could mean: (1) the city of Rome. Alternate translation: “in Rome, which is like Babylon” (2) the city of Babylon, as it appears in the ULT. See the discussion of this in the General Notes to this chapter. (See: **Symbolic Language (p.232)**) (See: **Symbolic Language (p.232)**)

fellow-elect one

If your language does not 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: “one whom God has elected” (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**) (See: **Active or Passive (p.135)**)

greet

As was customary in this culture, Peter concludes the letter by extending greetings from people who are with him and who know the people to whom he is writing. Your language may have a particular way of sharing greetings in a letter. If so, you could use that form here. Alternate translation: “asks to be remembered by” or “says hello to”

my son

Peter refers to Mark figuratively as if he were his **son**, because he taught him about Christianity and loved him like a **son**. If this might confuse your readers, you could express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the one who is like my son” or “my spiritual son” (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**) (See: **Metaphor (p.194)**)

Mark

Mark is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**) (See: **How to Translate Names (p.179)**)

1 Peter 5:14

Greet

Greet here is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. Alternate translation: “Make it your habit to greet” or “Make it your practice to greet” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.185)**) (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.185)**)

with a kiss of love

A **kiss** was an action that expressed Christian affection in this culture. It showed the unity of those who belong to Christ. If there is a gesture with similar meaning in your culture, you could consider using it here in your translation. Alternate translation: “with a loving kiss” or “a kiss to show your love for each other” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.230)**) (See: **Symbolic Action (p.230)**)

Peace to you, all those in Christ

As was customary in his culture, Peter closes his letter with a blessing for his readers. Use a form that people would recognize as a blessing in your language. Alternate translation: “May all you who are in Christ experience peace within yourselves” or “I pray that you all who are in Christ will have peace” (See: **Blessings (p.141)**) (See: **Blessings (p.141)**)

in Christ

See how you translated **in Christ** in [verse 10](#). (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**) (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.138)**)



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Version 79

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: 1 Peter 1:1; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Peter 1:3; 1 Peter 1:4; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 1:9; 1 Peter 1:10; 1 Peter 1:11; 1 Peter 1:14; 1 Peter 1:15; 1 Peter 1:18; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 Peter 2:1; 1 Peter 2:2; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Peter 2:12; 1 Peter 2:14; 1 Peter 2:15; 1 Peter 2:19; 1 Peter 3:2; 1 Peter 3:3; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Peter 3:10; 1 Peter 3:14; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Peter 3:16; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 Peter 4:3; 1 Peter 4:11; 1 Peter 4:13; 1 Peter 4:15; 1 Peter 4:17; 1 Peter 5:1; 1 Peter 5:2; 1 Peter 5:3; 1 Peter 5:5; 1 Peter 5:9; 1 Peter 5:10; 1 Peter 5:11

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: 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Peter 1:4; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 Peter 1:6; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 1:16; 1 Peter 1:18; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 Peter 1:25; 1 Peter 2:4; 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 2:8; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Peter 2:14; 1 Peter 2:20; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 Peter 2:23; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 2:25; 1 Peter 3:1; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Peter 3:9; 1 Peter 3:14; 1 Peter 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 Peter 3:20; 1 Peter 3:22; 1 Peter 4:6; 1 Peter 4:11; 1 Peter 4:14; 1 Peter 4:18; 1 Peter 5:1; 1 Peter 5:4; 1 Peter 5:5; 1 Peter 5:9; 1 Peter 5:13

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: 1 Peter 1:2; 1 Peter 1:5; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 1:11; 1 Peter 1:12; 1 Peter 1:15; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 Peter 2:2; 1 Peter 2:4; 1 Peter 2:5; 1 Peter 2:7; 1 Peter 2:8; 1 Peter 2:9; 1 Peter 2:13; 1 Peter 2:19; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 Peter 2:23; 1 Peter 3:2; 1 Peter 3:9; 1 Peter 3:11; 1 Peter 3:12; 1 Peter 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 Peter 3:19; 1 Peter 3:21; 1 Peter 3:22; 1 Peter 4:1; 1 Peter 4:2; 1 Peter 4:4; 1 Peter 4:5; 1 Peter 4:6; 1 Peter 4:7; 1 Peter 4:9; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Peter 4:13; 1 Peter 4:14; 1 Peter 4:16; 1 Peter 4:17; 1 Peter 5:1; 1 Peter 5:2; 1 Peter 5:4; 1 Peter 5:5; 1 Peter 5:10; 1 Peter 5:12; 1 Peter 5:14

Blessings

Description

Blessings are short sayings that people use to ask God to do something good for another person. In the Bible, the person saying the blessing speaks or writes directly to the person who will receive the blessing. The person who says the blessing does not directly speak to God, but it is understood that God is the one who will do the good thing mentioned. It is also understood that God hears the blessing, whether he is mentioned by name or not.

This page answers the question: *What are blessings, and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Writing Styles \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Poetry \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Each language has its own ways of saying blessings. There are many blessings in the Bible. They need to be translated in the way that people say blessings in your language, so that people recognize them as blessings and understand what one person wants God to do for another.

Examples From the Bible

In the Bible, people often said a blessing when they met someone or when they were leaving someone or sending someone off.

In the book of Ruth, when Boaz meets his workers in the fields, he greets them with a blessing:

Then behold, Boaz coming from Bethlehem! And he said to the reapers, “Yahweh be with you.” And they said to him, “May Yahweh bless you.” (Ruth 2:4 ULT)

Similarly, when Rebekah leaves her family, they say farewell with a blessing:

They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, “Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them.” (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

In a similar way, the writers of letters in the New Testament often wrote a blessing at the beginning of their letters as well as at the end. Here are examples from the beginning and end of Paul’s second letter to Timothy:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. (2 Tim 1:2 ULT) The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

Translation Strategies

Find out how people say blessings in your language. Collect a list of common blessings, noting the form of the verb, the use of certain words, and the words that are not used in a blessing but would normally be in a sentence. Also find out what differences there might be between blessings that people use when they are speaking to each other and when they are writing to each other.

If translating a blessing literally would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider doing that. If not, here are some options:

Add a verb if that is natural in your language.

Mention God as the subject of a blessing if that is natural in your language.

Translate the blessing in a form that is natural and clear in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Add a verb if that is natural in your language.

▮ The Lord with your spirit. The grace with you. (2 Tim 4:22, literal from the Greek)

In the Greek of this verse, there is no verb 'be.' However, in blessings in English, it is natural to use a verb. The idea that the 'grace' from God will be or remain with the person is implied in Greek.

The Lord **be** with your spirit. Grace **be** with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

(2) Mention God as the subject of a blessing if that is natural in your language.

If people expect a blessing to refer to God in your language, you might have to provide 'God' as the subject or as the source of the blessing. In Greek and Hebrew, usually God is not explicitly mentioned in the blessing, but it is implied that God is the one acting to show his kindness to the person being addressed.

▮ The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

The Lord be with your spirit. **May God give** grace to you.

▮ They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, "Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them." (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

They blessed Rebekah, and said to her, "Our sister, may **God grant that** you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may **God empower** your descendants **to** possess the gate of those who hate them."

(3) Translate the blessing in a form that is natural and clear in your language.

Here are some ideas for ways that people might say a blessing in their language.

▮ The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (2 Tim 4:22 ULT)

May the Lord be with your spirit. May God cause his grace to be with you.

May you have God's presence with you. May you experience grace from God.

▮ "Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and may your descendants possess the gate of those who hate them." (Genesis 24:60 ULT)

"Our sister, we pray to God that you may be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and appeal to him that your descendants may possess the gate of those who hate them."

"Our sister, by God's power you will be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and your descendants will possess the gate of those who hate them."

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:2](#); [1 Peter 5:14](#)

Collective Nouns

Description

This page answers the question: *What are collective nouns and how can I translate them?*

A collective noun is a singular noun that refers to a group of something. Examples: a **family**, **clan**, or **tribe** is a group of people who are related to each other; a **flock** is a group of birds or sheep; a **fleet** is a group of ships; and an **army** is a group of soldiers.

Many collective nouns are used exclusively as a singular replacement for a group as in the examples above. Frequently in the Bible the name of an ancestor is used, through a process of metonymy, as a collective noun referencing the group of his descendants. In the Bible, sometimes the singular noun will take a singular verb form, other times it will take a plural verb form. This may depend on how the author is thinking about the group, or whether the action is being done as a group or as individuals.

Reason This is a Translation Issue

There are several issues that require care when translating collective nouns. Further care is needed because the language you are translating into may not use collective nouns in the same way as the language you are translating from. Issues include:

The source language may have a collective noun for a group that the target language does not and vice-versa. You may have to translate a collective noun with a plural noun in your language, or you may need to translate a plural noun with a collective noun in your language.

Subject-verb agreement. Different languages or dialects may have different rules about using singular or plural verbs with collective nouns. Examples (from Wikipedia):

a singular noun with a singular verb: The team *is* in the dressing room.

a singular noun with a plural verb which is correct in British, but not American, English: The team *are* fighting among themselves. The team *have* finished the project.

Pronoun agreement. Similar to the previous, care needs to be taken to use the correct pronoun plurality and possibly gender or noun class to agree with the number/gender/class of the noun used. See the biblical examples below.

Clarity of referent. Especially if there is a mismatch in your translation between the verb and noun or pronoun concerning any of the factors above, readers may be confused about who or what is being referenced.

Examples from the Bible

And Joab and all the **army** which was with him arrived (2 Samuel 3:23a ULT)

The word in bold is written in singular form in both Hebrew and English, but it refers to a group of warriors that fight together.

and though the **flock** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls. (Habakkuk 3:17b ULT)

The word in bold is singular and refers to a group of sheep.

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **crowd** was coming to him, and he was teaching **them**. (Mark 2:13 ULT)

Note in this example that the noun is singular but the pronoun is plural. This may or may not be allowed or natural in your language.

Do not let **your heart** be troubled. **You** believe in God; believe also in me. (John 14:1 ULT)

In this verse, the words translated “your” and “you” are plural, referring to many people. The word “heart” is singular in form, but it refers to all of their hearts as a group.

And he shall take the **hair** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **it** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. (Num 6:18b ULT)

The word **hair** is singular, but it refers to many hairs, not just one.

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go.” (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

Here, “Israel” is singular, but means “the Israelites” by metonymy.

Translation Strategies

If your language has a collective (singular) noun that refers to the same group as referenced by the collective noun in the source text, then translate the word using that term. If not, here are some strategies to consider:

- (1) Translate the collective noun with a plural noun.
- (2) Add a plural word to the collective noun so that you can use a plural verb and pronouns.
- (3) Use a phrase to describe the group that the collective noun references. A useful strategy here can be to use a general collective noun that refers to a group of people or things.
- (4) If your language uses a collective noun for something that is a plural noun in the source language, you can translate the plural noun as a collective noun and, if necessary, change the form of the verb and any pronouns so that they agree with the singular noun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate the collective noun with a plural noun.

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go.” (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **the Israelites** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **the Israelites** go.”

And he shall take the **hair** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **it** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings. (Num 6:18b ULT)

And he shall take the **hairs** of the head of his separation. And he shall put **them** on the fire that is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings.

- (2) Add a plural word to the collective noun so that you can use a plural verb and pronouns.

And Joab and all the **army** which was with him arrived (2 Samuel 3:23a ULT)

And Joab and all the **army men who were** with him arrived

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **crowd** was coming to him, and he was teaching **them**. (Mark 2:13 ULT)

And he went out again beside the sea, and all the **people of the crowd were** coming to him, and he was teaching **them**.

- (3) Use a phrase to describe the group that the collective noun references. A useful strategy here can be to use a general collective noun that refers to a group of people or things.

and though the **flock** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls. (Habakkuk 3:17b ULT)

and though the **group of sheep** is cut off from the fold and there are no cattle in the stalls.

And Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **Israel** go." (Exodus 5:2 ULT)

And Pharaoh said, "Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to let **the people of Israel** go? I do not know Yahweh; and moreover, I will not let **the people of Israel** go."

(4) If your language uses a collective noun for something that is a plural noun in the source language, you can translate the plural noun as a collective noun and, if necessary, change the form of the verb and any pronouns so that they agree with the singular noun.

Now this John had his clothing from the **hairs** of a camel and a leather belt around his waist (Matthew 3:4a ULT)

Now this John had his clothing from the **hair** of a camel and a leather belt around his waist

You shall not make for yourself a carved figure nor any likeness that {is} in **the heavens** above, or that {is} in the earth beneath, or that {is} in **the waters** under the earth. (Deuteronomy 5:8 ULT)

You shall not make for yourself a carved figure nor any likeness that is in **heaven** above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in **the water** under the earth.

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 2:5](#); [1 Peter 2:9](#)

Connect — Contrast Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate a contrast relationship?*

Contrast Relationship

Description

A contrast relationship is a logical relationship in which one event or item is in contrast or opposition to another.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In Scripture, many events did not happen as the people involved intended or expected them to happen. Sometimes people acted in ways that were not expected, whether good or bad. Often it was God at work, changing the events. These events were often pivotal. It is important that translators understand and communicate these contrasts. In English, contrast relationships are often indicated by the words “but,” “although,” “even though,” “though,” “yet,” or “however.”

Examples From OBS and the Bible

You tried to do evil when you sold me as a slave, **but** God used the evil for good! (Story 8 Frame 12 OBS)

Joseph’s brothers’ evil plan to sell Joseph is contrasted with God’s good plan to save many people. The word “but” marks the contrast.

For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at the table? **Yet** I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)

Jesus contrasts the proud way that human leaders behave with the humble way that he behaves. The contrast is marked by the word “yet.”

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

It was unexpected that the Israelites, who had been slaves in Egypt, would be able to conquer and lay claim to the promised land.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses contrast relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.
- (2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.
- (3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the contrast relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a connecting word or phrase that is more specific or more clear.

For who is greater, the one who reclines at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? **Yet** I am among you as one who serves. (Luke 22:27 ULT)

For who is greater, the one who reclines at table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? **Unlike that person**, I am among you as one who serves.

(2) If it is more clear in your language to mark the other clause of the contrast relationship, then use a connecting word on the other clause.

The hill country will also be yours. **Though** it is a forest, you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders, for you will drive out the Canaanites, even **though** they have chariots of iron, and even **though** they are strong. (Joshua 17:18 ULT)

The hill country will also be yours. It is a forest, **but** you will clear it and it will become yours to its farthest borders. They have chariots of iron, and they are strong, **but** you will drive out the Canaanites.

(3) If your language shows a contrast relationship in a different way, then use that way.

{David} found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. **However**, Solomon built the house for him. **But** the Most High does not live in houses made with hands. (Acts 7:46-48a ULT)

[David] found favor in the sight of God, and he asked if he might find a dwelling place for the house of Jacob. **But** it was, Solomon, **not David**, who built the house for God. **Even though Solomon built him a house**, the Most High does not live in houses made with hands.

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 3:4](#)

Connect — Factual Conditions

Conditional Relationships

This page answers the question: *How can I translate factual conditions?*

Conditional connectors connect two clauses to indicate that one of them will happen when the other one happens. In English, the most common way to connect conditional clauses is with the words, “if ... then.” Often, however, the word “then” is not stated.

Factual Conditions

Description

A Factual Condition is a condition that sounds hypothetical but is already certain or true in the speaker’s mind. In English, a sentence containing a Factual Condition can use the words “even though,” “since,” or “this being the case” to indicate that it is a factual condition and not a hypothetical condition.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages do not state something as a condition if it is certain or true. Translators from these languages may misunderstand the original languages and think that the condition is uncertain. This would lead to mistakes in their translations. Even if the translators understand that the condition is certain or true, the readers may misunderstand it. In this case, it would be best to translate it as a statement of fact rather than as a conditional statement.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

“**If** Yahweh is God, worship him!” (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

Elijah came near to all the people and said, “How long will you keep changing your mind? **If Yahweh is God**, follow him. But if Baal is God, then follow him.” Yet the people did not answer him a word. (1 Kings 18:21 ULT)

This sentence has the same construction as a hypothetical condition. The condition is “if Yahweh is God.” If that is true, then the Israelites should worship Yahweh. But the prophet Elijah does not question whether or not Yahweh is God. In fact, he is so certain that Yahweh is God that later in the passage he pours water all over his sacrifice. He is confident that God is real and that he will burn even an offering that is completely wet. Over and over again, the prophets taught that Yahweh is God, so the people should worship him. The people did not worship Yahweh, however, even though He is God. By putting the statement or instruction into the form of a Factual Condition, Elijah is trying to get the Israelites to understand more clearly what they should do.

“A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **If I**, then, am a father, where is my honor? **If I** am a master, where is the reverence for me?” says Yahweh of hosts to you priests, who despise my name. (Malachi 1:6 ULT)

Yahweh has said that he is a father and a master to Israel, so even though this sounds like a hypothetical condition because it begins with “if,” it is not hypothetical. This verse begins with the proverb that a son honors his father. Everyone knows that is right. But the Israelites are not honoring Yahweh. The other proverb in the verse says that a servant honors his master. Everyone knows that is right. But the Israelites are not honoring Yahweh, so it seems that he is not their master. But Yahweh is the master. Yahweh uses the form of a hypothetical condition to demonstrate that the Israelites are wrong. The second part of the condition that should occur naturally is not happening, even though the conditional statement is true.

Translation Strategies

If using the form of a hypothetical condition is confusing or would make the reader think that the speaker doubts what he is saying in the first part of the sentence, then use a statement instead. Words such as “since” or “you know that ...” or “it is true that ...” can be helpful to make the meaning clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

“**If** Yahweh is God, worship him!” (Story 19 Frame 6 OBS)

“**It is true that** Yahweh is God, so worship him!”

“A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **If** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **If** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?” says Yahweh of hosts to you priests, who despise my name. (Malachi 1:6 ULT)

“A son honors his father, and a servant honors his master. **Since** I, then, am a father, where is my honor? **Since** I am a master, where is the reverence for me?”

”

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:6](#); [1 Peter 1:17](#); [1 Peter 2:3](#)

Connect — Goal (Purpose) Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate a goal (purpose) relationship?*

Goal (or Purpose) Relationship

Description

A Goal Relationship is a logical relationship in which the second event is the purpose or goal of the first event. In order for something to be a goal relationship, someone must do the first event with the intention that it will cause the second event.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In Scripture, the goal or purpose may be stated either first or second. But in some languages, the goal or purpose must always occur in the same position (either first or second) in order for that logical relationship to be understood. You (the translator) need to understand the relationship between the two parts and communicate those accurately in your language. This may require changing the order of the two events. It may also require specific words to indicate that one is the goal or purpose of the other. Words commonly used to indicate a goal relationship in English are “in order to,” “in order that” or “so that.” It is important that the translator recognize the words that signal a goal relationship and translate that relationship in a natural way.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

She became angry and falsely accused Joseph **so that he was arrested and sent to prison.** (Story 8 Frame 5 OBS)

The goal or purpose of the woman’s false accusation was to get Joseph arrested and sent to prison.

Meanwhile Gideon, his son, was threshing out wheat at the winepress **in order to hide from the presence of Midian.** (Judges 6:11b ULT)

Here the prepositional phrase begins with “in order to.”

Now if I have found favor in your eyes, show me your ways **so that I may know you and continue to find favor in your eyes.** Remember that this nation is your people. (Exodus 33:13 ULT)

Moses wants God to show him God’s ways for the goal or purpose of Moses knowing God and continuing to find favor with God.

Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **for her to glean,** and do not rebuke her! (Ruth 2:16 ULT)

The goal or purpose of Boaz instructing the men to pull out the grain from their bundles and leave it was for Ruth to gather (glean) it.

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem, **and let us see this thing that has happened,** which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULT)

The purpose of going to Bethlehem was to see the thing that had happened. Here the purpose is not marked and might be misunderstood.

“... if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” (Matthew 19:17b ULT)

The goal of keeping the commandments is to enter into life.

Do not turn from it to the right or to the left **so that you may be wise** in everything in which you walk. (Joshua 1:7c ULT)

The purpose of not turning away from the instructions that Moses gave to the Israelites was so that they would be wise.

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance**.’ So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

The purpose of the vine growers killing the heir was so they could take his inheritance. They state both events as a plan, joining them only with “and.” Then the word “so” marks the reporting of the first event, but the second event (the goal or purpose) is not stated.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses Goal or Purpose relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the construction of the Goal statement is unclear, change it to one that is more clear.
- (2) If the order of the statements makes the Goal statement unclear or confusing for the reader, then change the order.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the construction of the goal statement is unclear, change it to one that is more clear.

“Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **for her to glean**, and do not rebuke her!” (Ruth 2:16 ULT)

“Even be sure to pull some out from the bundles for her and leave it **so that she can glean it**, and do not rebuke her!”

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem, **and let us see this thing that has happened**, which the Lord has made known to us.” (Luke 2:15 ULT)

The shepherds said to each other, “Let us indeed go over as far as Bethlehem **so that we can see this thing that has happened**, which the Lord has made known to us.”

- (2) If the order of the statements makes the goal statement unclear or confusing for the reader, then change the order.

“... if you want **to enter into life**, keep the commandments.” (Matthew 19:17b ULT)

“... keep the commandments if you want **to enter into life**.” or: “... keep the commandments **so that you can enter into life**.”

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance**.’ So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

(1) and (2)

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **and take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. (Matt 21:38-39 ULT)

But when the vine growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him **so that we can take over his inheritance.**' So they took him, threw him out of the vineyard and killed him **so that they could take over his inheritance.**

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:2](#); [1 Peter 1:3](#); [1 Peter 1:4](#); [1 Peter 1:5](#); [1 Peter 4:2](#); [1 Peter 4:7](#)

Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship

Logical Relationships

Some connectors establish logical relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the reason-result relationship?*

Reason-and-Result Relationships

Description

A reason-and-result relationship is a logical relationship in which one event is the **reason** or cause for another event. The second event, then, is the **result** of the first event.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

A reason-and-result relationship can look forward — “I did Y because I wanted X to happen.” But usually it is looking backward — “X happened, and so I did Y.” Also, it is possible to state the reason either before or after the result. Many languages have a preferred order for the reason and the result, and it will be confusing for the reader if they are in the opposite order. Common words used to indicate a reason-and-result relationship in English are “because,” “so,” “therefore,” and “for.” Some of these words can also be used to indicate a goal relationship, so translators need to be aware of the difference between a goal relationship and a reason-and-result relationship. It is necessary for translators to understand how the two events are connected, and then communicate them clearly in their language.

If the reason and result are stated in different verses, it is still possible to put them in a different order. If you change the order of the verses, then put the verse numbers together at the beginning of the group of verses that were rearranged like this: 1-2. This is called a [Verse Bridge](#).

Examples From OBS and the Bible

The Jews were amazed, **because** Saul had tried to kill believers, and now he believed in Jesus!
(Story 46 Frame 6 OBS)

The **reason** is the change in Saul — that he had tried to kill people who believed in Jesus, and now he himself believed in Jesus. The **result** is that the Jews were amazed. “Because” connects the two ideas and indicates that what follows it is a reason.

Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, **so that** the boat was covered with the waves.
(Matthew 8:24a ULT)

The **reason** is the great storm, and the **result** is that the boat was covered with the waves. The two events are connected by “so that.” Notice that the term “so that” often indicates a goal relationship, but here the relationship is reason-and-result. This is because the sea cannot think and therefore does not have a goal.

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, **because** in it he rested from all his work which he had done in his creation. (Genesis 2:3 ULT)

The **result** is that God blessed and sanctified the seventh day. The **reason** is because he rested on the seventh day from his work.

“Blessed are the poor, **for** yours is the kingdom of God.” (Luke 6:20b ULT)

The **result** is that the poor are blessed. The **reason** is that the kingdom of God is theirs.

But he raised up in their place their sons that Joshua circumcised, being uncircumcised, **because** they had not been circumcised on the way. (Joshua 5:7 ULT)

The **result** is that Joshua circumcised the boys and men who had been born in the wilderness. The **reason** was that they had not been circumcised while they were journeying.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses reason-and-result relationships in the same way as in the text, then use them as they are.

- (1) If the order of the clauses is confusing for the reader, then change the order.
- (2) If the relationship between the clauses is not clear, then use a more clear connecting word.
- (3) If it is more clear to put a connecting word in the clause that does not have one, then do so.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, **because** in it he rested from all his work which he had done in his creation. (Genesis 2:3 ULT)

(1) God rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done in his creation. **That is why** he blessed the seventh day and sanctified it.

Blessed are the poor, **for** yours is the kingdom of God. (Luke 6:20 ULT)

- (1) The kingdom of God belongs to you who are poor. **Therefore**, the poor are blessed.
- (2) Blessed are the poor, **because** yours is the kingdom of God.
- (3) **The reason that** the poor are blessed **is because** yours is the kingdom of God.

Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, **so that** the boat was covered with the waves. (Matthew 8:24a ULT)

- (1) Behold, the boat was covered with the waves **because** a great storm arose on the sea.
- (2) Behold, a great storm arose on the sea, **with the result that** the boat was covered with the waves.
- (3) Behold, **because** a great storm arose on the sea, the boat was covered with the waves.

Since he was not able to find out anything for certain because of the noise, he ordered that he be brought into the fortress. (Acts 21:34b ULT)

- (1) The captain ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress, **because** he could not tell anything because of all the noise.
- (2) **Because** the captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.
- (3) The captain could not tell anything because of all the noise, **so** he ordered that Paul be brought into the fortress.

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:6](#); [1 Peter 2:1](#); [1 Peter 2:8](#); [1 Peter 2:20](#); [1 Peter 3:2](#); [1 Peter 3:17](#); [1 Peter 5:4](#)

Connect — Sequential Time Relationship

Time Relationships

Some connectors establish time relationships between two phrases, clauses, sentences, or chunks of text.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate clauses with a sequential time relationship?*

Sequential Clause

Description

A sequential clause is a time relation that connects two events in which one happens and then the other happens.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages indicate sequences of events in different ways; some use ordering, some use connecting words, some even use relative tense (Relative tense is a tense that refers to a time in relation to a reference point in the context.) Connecting words that may indicate sequence are words such as “then,” “later,” “after,” “afterward,” “before,” “first,” and “when.” Translators need to be certain that they communicate the order of the events in a way that is natural in their language. This may require ordering clauses differently than in the original languages.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

When Joseph came to his brothers, they kidnapped him and sold him to some slave traders. (OBS Story 8 Frame 2)

First Joseph came to his brothers, and then they kidnapped and sold him. We know this because of the connecting word “**when**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

It was as sweet as honey in my mouth, but **after** I ate it, my stomach became bitter. (Revelation 10:10b ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs first, and the event of the last clause occurs later. We know this because of the connecting word “**after**.” The translator needs to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

The event of the first clause occurs after the event of the second clause. First the land they dread will be desolate, and then the child will know to refuse evil and choose good. We know this because of the connecting word “**before**.” However, stating the clauses in this order may communicate the wrong order of events in your language. The translator may have to change the order so that the clauses come in the order that they happen. Or it may be possible to keep the order of the original language text and mark the ordering of sequence so that it is clear to the readers. You (the translator) need to decide the best way to communicate this sequence clearly and correctly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Here the general connector “**and**” connects four events. These are sequential events—each happens after the one before it. We know this because that is the only way that these events would happen. So in English, the general connector “and” is enough to make the sequence clear for events such as these. You will need to decide if this also communicates this sequence clearly and correctly in your language.

Translation Strategies

If the sequence of events is clear in your language, then translate the sequence as it is.

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.
- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the connecting word is not clear, use a connecting word that communicates the sequence more clearly.

Then Mary arose in those days **and** quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah, **and** she entered into the house of Zechariah **and** greeted Elizabeth. (Luke 1:39-40 ULT)

Then Mary arose in those days. **Then** she quickly went into the hill country, to a city of Judah. **Then** she entered into the house of Zechariah, **and then** she greeted Elizabeth.

For **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate (Isaiah 7:16 ULT)

For the time will come when the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good, **but even before that time**, the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate.

- (2) If the clauses are in an order that makes the sequence unclear, put the clauses in an order that is more clear.

For the land whose two kings you dread will be desolate **before** the child knows to refuse the evil and choose the good.

For more about sequences of events, see [Sequence of Events](#).

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 2:24](#)

Connecting Words and Phrases

Description

This page answers the question: *How do connecting words work to join parts of the text in different ways?*

As humans, we write our thoughts in phrases and sentences. We usually want to communicate a series of thoughts that are connected to each other in different ways. **Connecting words and phrases** show how these thoughts are related to each other. For example, we can show how the following thoughts are related by using the Connecting Words in bold type:

- It was raining, **so** I opened my umbrella.
- It was raining, **but** I did not have an umbrella. **So** I got very wet.

Connecting words or phrases can connect phrases or clauses within a sentence. They can connect sentences to each other. They can also connect entire chunks to one another in order to show how the chunk before relates to the chunk after the connecting word. Very often, the connecting words that connect entire chunks to one another are either conjunctions or adverbs.

It was raining, but I did not have an umbrella, so I got very wet.

Now I must change my clothes. Then I will drink a cup of hot tea and warm myself by the fire.

In the above example, the word **now** connects the two short chunks of text, showing the relationship between them. The speaker must change his clothes, drink hot tea, and warm himself because of something that happened earlier (that is, he got wet in the rain).

Sometimes people might not use a connecting word because they expect the context to help the readers understand the relationship between the thoughts. Some languages do not use connecting words as much as other languages do. They might say:

- It was raining. I did not have an umbrella. I got very wet.

You (the translator) will need to use the method that is most natural and clear in the target language. But in general, using connecting words whenever possible helps the reader to understand the ideas in the Bible most clearly.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- You need to understand the relationship between paragraphs, between sentences, and between parts of sentences in the Bible, and how connecting words and phrases can help you to understand the relationship between the thoughts that they are connecting.
- Each language has its own ways of showing how thoughts are related.
- You need to know how to help readers understand the relationship between the thoughts in a way that is natural in your language.

Translation Principles

- You need to translate in a way that readers can understand the same relationship between thoughts that the original readers would have understood.
- Whether or not a connecting word is used is not as important as readers being able to understand the relationship between the ideas.

The Different Types of Connections

Listed below are different types of connections between ideas or events. These different types of connections can be indicated by using different connecting words. When we write or translate something, it is important to use the right connecting word so that these connections are clear for the reader. If you would like additional information, simply click the colored, hyperlinked word to be directed to a page containing definitions and examples for each type of connection.

- [Sequential Clause](#) — a time relationship between two events in which one happens and then the other happens.
- [Simultaneous Clause](#) — a time relationship between two or more events that occur at the same time.
- [Background Clause](#) — a time relationship in which the first clause describes a long event that is happening at the time when the beginning of the second event happens, which is described in the second clause.
- [Exceptional Relationship](#) — one clause describes a group of people or items, and the other clause excludes one or more items or people from the group.
- [Hypothetical Condition](#) — the second event will only take place if the first one takes place. Sometimes what takes place is dependent on the actions of other people.
- [Factual Condition](#) — a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain or true, so that the condition is guaranteed to happen.
- [Contrary-to-Fact Condition](#) — a connection that sounds hypothetical but is already certain that it is not true. See also: [Hypothetical Statements](#).
- [Goal Relationship](#) — a logical relationship in which the second event is the purpose or goal of the first.
- [Reason and Result Relationship](#) — a logical relationship in which one event is the reason for the other event, the result.
- [Contrast Relationship](#) — one item is being described as different or in opposition to another.

Examples from the Bible

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. **Instead**, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. **Then** after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days. (Galatians 1:16b-18 ULT)

The word “instead” introduces something that contrasts with what was said before. The contrast here is between what Paul did not do and what he did do. The word “then” introduces a sequence of events. It introduces something that Paul did after he returned to Damascus.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

The word “therefore” links this section with the section before it, signaling that the section that came before gave the reason for this section. “Therefore” usually links sections larger than one sentence. The word “and” links only two actions within the same sentence, that of breaking commandments and teaching others. In this verse the word “but” contrasts what one group of people will be called in God’s kingdom with what another group of people will be called.

We place nothing as a stumbling block in front of anyone, **so that** our ministry might not be discredited. **Instead**, we commend ourselves in everything as God’s servants. (2 Corinthians 6:3-4 ULT)

Here the words “so that” connect what follows as the reason for what came before; the reason that Paul does not place stumbling blocks is that he does not want his ministry brought into disrepute. “Instead” contrasts what Paul does (prove by his actions that he is God’s servant) with what he said he does not do (place stumbling blocks).

General Translation Strategies

See each type of Connecting Word above for specific strategies

If the way the relationship between thoughts is shown in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, then consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).
- (2) Do not use a connecting word if it would be strange to use one and people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.
- (3) Use a different connecting word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a connecting word (even if the ULT does not use one).

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." Then immediately they left the nets and followed him. (Mark 1:17-18 ULT)

They followed Jesus because he told them to. Some translators may want to mark this clause with the connecting word "so."

Jesus said to them, "Come follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." **So**, immediately they left the nets and followed him.

- (2) Do not use a connecting word if it would be odd to use one, and if people would understand the right relationship between the thoughts without it.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Some languages would prefer not to use connecting words here because the meaning is clear without them and using them would be unnatural. They might translate like this:

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments, teaching others to do so as well, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood. I did not go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me. **Instead**, I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. **Then** after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days. (Galatians 1:16b-18 ULT) (Galatians 1:16-18 ULT)

Some languages might not need the words "instead" or "then" here. They might translate like this:

I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who had become apostles before me. I went to Arabia and then returned to Damascus. After three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and I stayed with him 15 days.

- (3) Use a different connecting word.

Therefore, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments **and** teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. **But** whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:19 ULT)

Instead of a word like “therefore,” a language might need a phrase to indicate that there was a section before it that gave the reason for the section that follows. Also, the word “but” is used here because of the contrast between the two groups of people. But in some languages, the word “but” would show that what comes after it is surprising because of what came before it. So “and” might be clearer for those languages. They might translate like this:

Because of that, whoever breaks the least one of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.
And whoever keeps them and teaches them, that one will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

”

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:13](#); [1 Peter 4:1](#)

Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding

Description

In some languages, phrases that modify a noun can be used with the noun for two different purposes. They can either (1) distinguish the noun from other similar items, or (2) they can give more information about the noun. That information could be new to the reader, or a reminder about something the reader might already know. Other languages use modifying phrases with a noun only for distinguishing the noun from other similar things. When people who speak these languages hear a modifying phrase along with a noun, they assume that its function is to distinguish one item from another similar item.

This page answers the question: *When a phrase is used with a noun, what is the difference between phrases that distinguish the noun from others and phrases that simply inform or remind?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Parts of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

When the phrase that modifies a noun is a relative clause (a phrase that starts with a word such as “who” or “which”), some languages use a comma to mark the difference between (1) making a distinction between similar items and (2) giving more information about an item. Without the comma, the sentence below communicates that the added phrase is making a distinction:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister who was very thankful**.
 - If her sister was usually thankful, the phrase “who was thankful” could distinguish this sister of Mary’s from another sister who was not usually thankful.

With the comma, the phrase is giving more information:

- Mary gave some of the food to **her sister, who was very thankful**.
 - This same phrase can be used to give us more information about Mary’s sister. It tells us about how Mary’s sister responded when Mary gave her the food. In this case it does not distinguish one sister from another sister.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Many source languages of the Bible use phrases that modify a noun both for distinguishing the noun from another similar item and also for giving more information about the noun. You (the translator) must be careful to understand which meaning the author intended in each case.
- Some languages use phrases that modify a noun only for distinguishing the noun from another similar item. When translating a phrase that is used for giving more information, translators who speak these languages will need to separate the phrase from the noun. Otherwise, people who read it or hear it will think that the phrase is meant to distinguish the noun from other similar items.

Examples From the Bible

Examples of words and phrases that are used to distinguish one item from other possible items:

(These usually do not cause any problem in translation.)

█ The curtain is to separate **the holy place** from **the most holy place**. (Exodus 26:33b ULT)

The words “holy” and “most holy” distinguish two different places from each other and from any other place.

█ A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to **the woman who bore him**. (Proverbs 17:25 ULT)

The phrase “who bore him” distinguishes which woman the son is bitterness to. He is not bitterness to all women, but to his mother.

Examples of words and phrases that are used to give added information or a reminder about an item:

(These are a translation issue for languages that do not use these.)

... for **your righteous judgments** are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

The word “righteous” simply reminds us that God’s judgments are righteous. It does not distinguish his righteous judgments from his unrighteous judgments, because all of his judgments are righteous.

You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

The phrases “to your needy and to your poor” give further information about “your brother.” They do not refer to a separate group of people.

How can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

The phrase “who is 90 years old” is a reminder of Sarah’s age. It tells why Abraham was asking the question. He did not expect that a woman who was that old could bear a child. He was not distinguishing one woman named Sarah from another woman named Sarah who was a different age.

I will wipe away mankind **whom I have created** from the surface of the earth. (Genesis 6:7 ULT)

The phrase “whom I have created” is a reminder of the relationship between God and mankind. It is the reason God had the right to wipe away mankind. There is not another mankind that God did not create.

I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

By saying “worthless idols,” David was commenting about all idols and giving his reason for hating those who serve them. He was not distinguishing worthless idols from valuable idols.

Translation Strategies

If readers would understand the purpose of a phrase with a noun, then consider keeping the phrase and the noun together. For languages that use words or phrases with a noun only to distinguish one item from another, here are some strategies for translating phrases that are used to inform or remind.

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose. (2) Use one of your language’s ways for expressing that this is just added information. It may be by adding a small word, or by changing the way the voice sounds. Sometimes changes in the voice can be shown with punctuation marks, such as parentheses or commas.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Put the information in another part of the sentence and add words that show its purpose.

I hate those who serve **worthless** idols (Psalm 31:6 ULT)

Because idols are worthless, I hate those who serve them.

... for your **righteous** judgments are good. (Psalm 119:39b ULT)

... for your judgments are good **because they are righteous**.

Can Sarah, **who is 90 years old**, bear a son? (Genesis 17:17b ULT)

Can Sarah bear a son **even when she is 90 years old**?

You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

You must surely open your hand to any of **your needy and poor brothers** in your land.

(2) Use one of your language's ways for expressing that this is just added information.

You are my Son, **whom I love**. I am pleased with you. (Luke 3:22 ULT)

You are my Son. **I love you** and I am pleased with you.

Receiving my love, you are my Son. I am pleased with you.

You must surely open your hand to your brother, **to your needy and to your poor** in your land. (Deuteronomy 15:11 ULT)

You must surely open your hand to your brother **who is needy and poor** in your land.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Double Negatives (UTA PDF)

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:1](#); [1 Peter 2:6](#)

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 “use**less**.” Some other kinds of words also have a negative meaning, such as “lack” or “reject,” or even “fight” or “evil.”

A double negative occurs when a clause has two words that each have a negative meaning.

We did this **not** because we have **no** authority ... (2 Thessalonians 3:9a ULT)

And this was **not** done **without** an oath! (Hebrews 7:20a ULT)

Be sure of this—the wicked person will **not** go **un**punished. (Proverbs 11:21a ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Double negatives mean very different things in different languages.

- In some languages, such as English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one, creating a positive sentence. So, “He is not unintelligent” means “He is intelligent.”
- In some languages, such as French and Spanish, two negative words in a clause do not cancel each other to become a positive. The Spanish sentence, “No vi a nadie,” literally says “I did not see no one.” It has both the word ‘no’ next to the verb and ‘nadie,’ which means “no one.” The two negatives are seen as in agreement with each other, and the sentence means, “I did not see anyone.”
- In some languages, a double negative creates a stronger negative statement.
- In some languages, a double negative creates a positive sentence, but it is a weak statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” means, “He is somewhat intelligent.”
- In some languages, including the languages of the Bible, a double negative can produce a stronger positive meaning than a simple positive statement. So, “He is not unintelligent” can mean “He is very intelligent.” In this case, the double negative is actually the figure of speech called [litotes](#).

Biblical Greek can do all of the above. So to translate sentences with double negatives accurately and clearly in your language, you need to know what each double negative means in the Bible and how to express the same idea in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The Greek of John 15:5 says:

χωρίς ἐμοῦ **οὐ** δύνασθε ποιεῖν **οὐδέν**
Without me **not** you can do **nothing**

We cannot reproduce this double negative in the English ULT because in English, a second negative in a clause cancels the first one. In English, and perhaps in your language, we need to choose only one of the negatives and say either:

Without me, you can do **nothing**.

or:

Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

... in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

This means "in order to be fruitful."

A prophet is **not without** honor (Mark 6:4 ULT)

This means "a prophet is honored."

I do **not** want you to be **ignorant**. (1 Corinthians 12:1)

This means "I want you to be knowledgeable."

Translation Strategies

If the way that the double negative is used in the Bible is natural and has the same meaning as in your language, consider using it in the same way. Otherwise, you could consider these strategies:

- (1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.
- (2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.
- (3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a positive statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove the two negatives so that it is positive.

For we do **not** have a high priest who **cannot** feel sympathy for our weaknesses. (Hebrews 4:15a ULT)

"For we have a high priest who can feel sympathy for our weaknesses."

... in order **not** to be **unfruitful**. (Titus 3:14b ULT)

"... so that they may be fruitful."

- (2) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives.

χωρίς ἑμοῦ οὐ δύνασθε ποιεῖν οὐδέν
Without me **not** you can do **nothing** (John 15:5)

Without me, you can do **nothing**.

or:

Without me, you **cannot** do anything.

(3) If the purpose of a double negative in the Bible is to make a stronger negative statement, and if it would not do that in your language, remove one of the two negatives and add a strengthening word.

...ἰώτα ἓν ἢ μία κεραία **οὐ μὴ** παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου (Matthew 5:18)
...iota one or one serif **not not** may pass away from the law

...**not even** one iota or one serif may pass away from the law
or:
...**certainly no** iota or serif may pass away from the law

Next we recommend you learn about: "

[Verbs \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [1 Peter 2:6](#); [1 Peter 3:6](#)

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.

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.

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 \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:8](#); [1 Peter 1:10](#); [1 Peter 1:19](#); [1 Peter 1:23](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#); [1 Peter 2:18](#); [1 Peter 3:11](#); [1 Peter 3:22](#); [1 Peter 4:7](#); [1 Peter 4:13](#); [1 Peter 4:18](#); [1 Peter 5:2](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#); [1 Peter 5:10](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:23](#); [1 Peter 2:7](#); [1 Peter 2:16](#); [1 Peter 3:1](#); [1 Peter 3:9](#); [1 Peter 3:19](#); [1 Peter 3:20](#); [1 Peter 4:11](#); [1 Peter 4:17](#); [1 Peter 5:2](#); [1 Peter 5:9](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:3](#); [1 Peter 2:24](#); [1 Peter 4:17](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:1](#); [1 Peter 1:16](#); [1 Peter 2:6](#); [1 Peter 4:16](#)

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.

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: [Introduction to 1 Peter](#)

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)

Generic Noun Phrases

Description

Generic noun phrases refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things. This happens frequently in proverbs, because proverbs tell about things that are true about people in general.

This page answers the question: *What are generic noun phrases and how can I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Parts of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Can **a man** walk on hot coals without scorching his feet? So is **the man who goes in to his neighbor's wife; the one who touches her** will not go unpunished. (Proverbs 6:28-29 ULT)

The phrases in bold above do not refer to a specific man. They refer to any man who does these things.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of showing that noun phrases refer to something in general. You (the translator) should refer to these general ideas in ways that are natural in your language.

Examples From the Bible

The **righteous person** is kept away from trouble and it comes upon **the wicked** instead. (Proverbs 11:8 ULT)

The bold phrases above do not refer to a specific person but to anyone who does what is right or anyone who is wicked.

People curse **the man who refuses to sell grain**. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

This does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who refuses to sell grain.

Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)

The phrase "a good man" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who is good. The phrase "a man who makes evil plans" does not refer to a particular man, but to any person who makes evil plans.

Translation Strategies

If your language can use the same wording as in the ULT to refer to people or things in general rather than to specific individuals or things, consider using the same wording. If not, here are some strategies you might use.

- (1) Use the word "the" in the noun phrase.
- (2) Use the word "a" in the noun phrase.
- (3) Use the word "any," as in "any person" or "anyone."
- (4) Use the plural form, as in "people."
- (5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the word "the" in the noun phrase.

Yahweh gives favor to **a good man**, but he condemns **a man who makes evil plans**. (Proverbs 12:2 ULT)

“Yahweh gives favor to **the good man**, but he condemns **the man who makes evil plans**.” (Proverbs 12:2)

(2) Use the word “a” in the noun phrase.

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **a man** who refuses to sell grain.”

(3) Use the word “any,” as in “any person” or “anyone.”

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **any man** who refuses to sell grain.”

(4) Use the plural form, as in “people” (or in this sentence, “men”).

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **men** who refuse to sell grain”

(5) Use any other way that is natural in your language.

People curse **the man** who refuses to sell grain. (Proverbs 11:26 ULT)

“People curse **whoever** refuses to sell grain.”

Next we recommend you learn about:

When Masculine Words Include Women (UTA PDF)

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:24](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#); [1 Peter 3:7](#); [1 Peter 3:12](#); [1 Peter 4:18](#)

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: [Introduction to 1 Peter](#); [1 Peter 1:1](#); [1 Peter 3:6](#); [1 Peter 5:13](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:13](#); [1 Peter 1:14](#); [1 Peter 1:21](#); [1 Peter 2:12](#); [1 Peter 3:1](#); [1 Peter 3:6](#); [1 Peter 3:12](#); [1 Peter 4:14](#); [1 Peter 4:18](#)

Imperatives — Other Uses

Description

Imperative sentences are mainly used to express a desire or requirement that someone do something. In the Bible, sometimes imperative sentences have other uses.

This page answers the question: *What other uses are there for imperative sentences in the Bible?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Sentence Types \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use an imperative sentence for some of the functions that they are used for in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Speakers often use imperative sentences to tell or ask their listeners to do something. In Genesis 26, God spoke to Isaac and told him not to go to Egypt but to live where God would tell him to live.

Now Yahweh appeared to him and said, “**Do not go down** to Egypt; **live** in the land that I tell you to live in.” (Genesis 26:2 ULT)

Sometimes imperative sentences in the Bible have other uses.

Imperatives that make things happen

God can make things happen by commanding that they happen. Jesus healed a man by commanding that the man be healed. The man could not do anything to obey the command, but Jesus caused him to be healed by commanding it. (In this context, the command “Be clean” means to “be healed” so that others around would know that it was safe to touch the man again.)

“I am willing. **Be clean.**” Immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

In Genesis 1, God commanded that there should be light, and by commanding it, he caused it to exist. Some languages, such as the Hebrew of the Bible, have commands that are in the third person. English does not do that, and so it must turn the third-person command into a general, second-person command, as in the ULT:

God said, “**Let there be** light,” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

Languages that have third-person commands can follow the original Hebrew, which translates into English as something like “light must be.”

Imperatives that function as blessings

In the Bible, God blesses people by using imperatives. This indicates what his will is for them.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful**, and **multiply**. **Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

Imperatives that function as conditions

An imperative sentence can also be used to tell the **condition** under which something will happen. The proverbs mainly tell about life and things that often happen. The purpose of Proverbs 4:6 below is not primarily to give a command, but to teach what people can expect to happen **if** they love wisdom.

Do not abandon wisdom and she will watch over you; **love** her and she will keep you safe.
(Proverbs 4:6 ULT)

The purpose of Proverbs 22:6, below, is to teach what people can expect to happen if they teach their children the way they should go.

Teach a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.
- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.
- (3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If people would not use an imperative sentence for one of the functions in the Bible, try using a statement instead.

Be clean. (Matthew 8:3b ULT)

“You are now clean.” “I now cleanse you.”

God said, “**Let there be light,**” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, “**There is now light**” and there was light.

God blessed them and said to them, “**Be fruitful, and multiply. Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **Have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.” (Genesis 1:28 ULT)

God blessed them and said to them, “**My will for you is that you be fruitful, and multiply. Fill** the earth, and **subdue** it. **I want you to have dominion** over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves upon the earth.”

- (2) If people would not understand that a sentence is used to cause something to happen, add a connecting word like “so” to show that what happened was a result of what was said.

God said, “**Let there be light,**” and there was light. (Genesis 1:3 ULT)

God said, ‘Let there be light,’ **so** there was light. God said, “Light must be;” **as a result**, there was light.

- (3) If people would not use a command as a condition, translate it as a statement with the words “if” and “then.”

Teach a child the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction. (Proverbs 22:6 ULT)

Translated as:

“**If** you teach a child the way he should go, **then** when he is old he will not turn away from that instruction.”

”

Referenced in: [1 Peter 5:14](#)

Information Structure

Description

Different languages arrange the parts of the sentence in different ways. In English, a sentence normally has the subject first, then the verb, then the object, then other modifiers, like this: Peter painted his house yesterday.

Many other languages normally put these things in a different order such as: Painted yesterday Peter his house.

Although all languages have a normal order for parts of a sentence, this order can change depending on what information the speaker or writer considers to be the most important.

Suppose that someone is answering the question, "What did Peter paint yesterday?" The person asking the question already knows all of the information in our sentence above except for the object, "his house." Therefore, that becomes the most important part of the information, and a person answering in English might say "His house is what Peter painted (yesterday)."

This puts the most important information first, which is normal for English. Many Other Languages would normally put the most important information last. In the flow of a text, the most important information is usually what the writer considers to be new information for the reader. In some languages the new information comes first, and in others it comes last.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Different languages arrange the parts of a sentence in different ways. If you (the translator) copy the order of the parts of a sentence from the source, it may not make sense in your language.
- Different languages put important or new information in different places in the sentence. If you keep the important or new information in the same place that it had in the source language, it may be confusing or give the wrong message in your language.

Examples From the Bible

They all ate until they were satisfied. (Mark 6:42 ULT)

The parts of this sentence were in a different order in the original Greek source language. They were like this: And they ate all and they were satisfied.

In English, this means that the people ate everything. But the next verse says that they took up twelve baskets full of leftover pieces of food. In order for this to not be so confusing, the translators of the ULT put the parts of the sentence in the right order for English.

And the day began to end, and the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in an desolate place." (Luke 9:12 ULT)

In this verse, what the disciples say to Jesus puts the important information first, that he should send the crowd away. In languages that put the important information last, people would understand that the reason that they gave, being in an isolated place, is the most important part of their message to Jesus. They might then think that the disciples are afraid of the spirits in that place, and that sending the people to buy food is a way to protect them from the spirits. That is the wrong message.

This page answers the question: *How do languages arrange the parts of a sentence?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers treated the false prophets in the same way. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

In this verse, the most important part of the information is first, that “woe” is coming on the people for what they are doing. The reason that supports that warning comes last. This could be confusing for people who expect the important information to come last.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.
- (2) Study where your language puts the new or important information, and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Study how your language arranges the parts of a sentence, and use that order in your translation.

This is the verse in the original Greek order:

And he went out from there and came to the hometown his, and they followed him the disciples his. (Mark 6:1)

The ULT has put this into the normal order for English:

Now Jesus went out from there and came to his hometown, and his disciples followed him. (Mark 6:1 ULT)

- (2) Study where your language puts the new or important information and rearrange the order of information so that it follows the way it is done in your language.

And the day began to end, and the twelve came and said to him, “Send the crowd away so that, going into the surrounding villages and countryside, they may find lodging and food, because we are here in a desolate place.” (Luke 9:12 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

Now the day was about to come to an end, and the twelve came to him and said, “Because we are here in an desolate place, send the crowd away that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and food.”

Woe to you, when all men speak well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. (Luke 6:26 ULT)

If your language puts the important information last, you can change the order of the verse.

When all men speak well of you, which is just as people’s ancestors treated the false prophets, then woe to you!

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Word Order \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:3](#); [1 Peter 1:7](#); [1 Peter 1:18](#); [1 Peter 2:15](#); [1 Peter 3:16](#); [1 Peter 3:21](#); [1 Peter 3:22](#); [1 Peter 5:10](#)

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: [1 Peter 4:9](#)

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: [1 Peter 4:5](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:1](#); [1 Peter 1:2](#); [1 Peter 1:3](#); [1 Peter 1:4](#); [1 Peter 1:7](#); [1 Peter 1:9](#); [1 Peter 1:12](#); [1 Peter 1:13](#); [1 Peter 1:14](#); [1 Peter 1:17](#); [1 Peter 1:18](#); [1 Peter 1:22](#); [1 Peter 1:23](#); [1 Peter 1:24](#); [1 Peter 2 General Notes](#); [1 Peter 2:1](#); [1 Peter 2:2](#); [1 Peter 2:3](#); [1 Peter 2:4](#); [1 Peter 2:5](#); [1 Peter 2:6](#); [1 Peter 2:7](#); [1 Peter 2:8](#); [1 Peter 2:9](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#); [1 Peter 2:12](#); [1 Peter 2:16](#); [1 Peter 2:17](#); [1 Peter 2:18](#); [1 Peter 2:21](#); [1 Peter 2:22](#); [1 Peter 2:24](#); [1 Peter 2:25](#); [1 Peter 3:4](#); [1 Peter 3:5](#); [1 Peter 3:7](#); [1 Peter 3:9](#); [1 Peter 3:10](#); [1 Peter 3:11](#); [1 Peter 3:15](#); [1 Peter 3:19](#); [1 Peter 4:1](#); [1 Peter 4:3](#); [1 Peter 4:4](#); [1 Peter 4:5](#); [1 Peter 4:7](#); [1 Peter 4:8](#); [1 Peter 4:10](#); [1 Peter 4:12](#); [1 Peter 4:17](#); [1 Peter 5:2](#); [1 Peter 5:3](#); [1 Peter 5:4](#); [1 Peter 5:5](#); [1 Peter 5:6](#); [1 Peter 5:7](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#); [1 Peter 5:9](#); [1 Peter 5:12](#); [1 Peter 5:13](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:2](#); [1 Peter 1:13](#); [1 Peter 1:19](#); [1 Peter 1:22](#); [1 Peter 1:23](#); [1 Peter 1:24](#); [1 Peter 1:25](#); [1 Peter 2:8](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#); [1 Peter 2:22](#); [1 Peter 2:24](#); [1 Peter 3:1](#); [1 Peter 3:4](#); [1 Peter 3:15](#); [1 Peter 3:17](#); [1 Peter 3:18](#); [1 Peter 3:20](#); [1 Peter 3:21](#); [1 Peter 3:22](#); [1 Peter 4:1](#); [1 Peter 4:2](#); [1 Peter 4:5](#); [1 Peter 4:6](#); [1 Peter 4:14](#); [1 Peter 5:6](#); [1 Peter 5:12](#)

Parallelism

Description

Parallelism is a poetic device in which two phrases or clauses that are similar in structure or idea are used together. The following are some of the different kinds of parallelism.

- The second clause or phrase means the same as the first. This is called synonymous parallelism.
- The second clarifies or strengthens the meaning of the first.
- The second completes what is said in the first.
- The second says something that contrasts with the first, but adds to the same idea.

Parallelism is most commonly found in Old Testament poetry, such as in the books of Psalms and Proverbs. It also occurs in Greek in the New Testament, both in the four gospels and in the apostles' letters.

This article will only discuss synonymous parallelism, the kind in which the two parallel phrases mean the same thing, because that is the kind that presents a problem for translation. Note that we use the term "synonymous parallelism" for long phrases or clauses that have the same meaning. We use the term "doublet" for words or very short phrases that mean basically the same thing and are used together.

In the poetry of the original languages, synonymous parallelism has several effects:

- It shows that something is very important by saying it more than once and in more than one way.
- It helps the hearer to think more deeply about the idea by saying it in different ways.
- It makes the language more beautiful and raises it above the ordinary way of speaking.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use synonymous parallelism. They would either think it odd that someone said the same thing twice, or, since it is in the Bible, they would think that the two phrases must have some difference in meaning. For them it would be confusing, rather than beautiful. They would not understand that the repetition of the idea in different words serves to emphasize the idea.

Examples From the Bible

Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light for my path. (Psalm 119:105 ULT)

Both parts of the sentence are metaphors saying that God's word teaches people how to live. That is the single idea. The words "lamp" and "light" are similar in meaning because they refer to light. The words "my feet" and "my path" are related because they refer to a person walking. Walking is a metaphor for living.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands;
you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULT)

Both lines say that God made man the ruler of everything. "To rule over" is the same idea as putting things "under his feet," and "the works of your [God's] hands" is the same idea as "all things."

Yahweh sees everything a person does
and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

This page answers the question: *What is parallelism?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Figures of Speech (UTA PDF)

The first phrase and the second phrase mean the same thing. There are three ideas that are the same between these two phrases. “Sees” corresponds to “watches,” “everything...does” corresponds to “all the paths...takes,” and “a person” corresponds to “he.”

Praise Yahweh, all you nations;
exalt him, all you peoples! (Psalm 117:1 ULT)

Both parts of this verse tell people everywhere to praise Yahweh. The words ‘Praise’ and ‘exalt’ mean the same thing. The words ‘Yahweh’ and ‘him’ refer to the same person. The terms ‘all you nations’ and ‘all you peoples’ refer to the same people.

For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people,
and he will fight in court against Israel. (Micah 6:2b ULT)

The two parts of this verse say that Yahweh has a serious disagreement with his people, Israel. These are not two different disagreements or two different groups of people.

Translation Strategies

For most kinds of parallelism, it is good to translate both of the clauses or phrases. For synonymous parallelism, it is good to translate both clauses if people in your language understand that the purpose of saying something twice is to strengthen a single idea. But if your language does not use parallelism in this way, then consider using one of the following translation strategies.

- (1) Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.
- (2) If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”
- (3) If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and use words like “very,” “completely,” or “all.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Combine the ideas of both clauses into one.

Until now you have dealt deceitfully with me and you have spoken lies to me. (Judges 16:13, ULT)

Delilah expressed this idea twice to emphasize that she was very upset.

Until now you have deceived me with your lies.
Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

The phrase “all the paths he takes” is a metaphor for “all he does.”

Yahweh pays attention to everything a person does.
For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, and he will fight in court against Israel. (Micah 6:2 ULT)

This parallelism describes one serious disagreement that Yahweh had with one group of people. If this is unclear, the phrases can be combined:

For Yahweh has a lawsuit with his people, Israel.

- (2) If it appears that the clauses are used together to show that what they say is really true, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and include words that emphasize the truth such as “truly” or “certainly.”

Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

Yahweh truly sees everything a person does.

You make him to rule over the works of your hands; you have put all things under his feet (Psalm 8:6 ULT)

You have certainly made him to rule over everything that you have created.

(3) If it appears that the clauses are used together to intensify an idea in them, you could combine the ideas of both clauses into one and use words like “very,” “completely” or “all.”

Until now you have dealt deceitfully with me and you have spoken lies to me. (Judges 16:13, ULT)

All you have done is lie to me.

Yahweh sees everything a person does and watches all the paths he takes. (Proverbs 5:21 ULT)

Yahweh sees absolutely everything that a person does.

Next we recommend you learn about: "

Personification (UTA PDF)

Referenced in: [1 Peter 2:8](#); [1 Peter 3:10](#); [1 Peter 3:14](#)

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: [1 Peter 2:4](#); [1 Peter 2:6](#); [1 Peter 2:11](#)

Possession

Description

In English, the grammatical form that commonly indicates possession is also used to indicate a variety of relationships between people and objects or people and other people. In English, that grammatical relationship is shown by using the word “of,” by using **an apostrophe and the letter “s”**, or by using a **possessive pronoun**. The following examples are different ways to indicate that my grandfather owns a house.

- the house **of** my grandfather
- my grandfather **'s** house
- **his** house

Possession is used in Hebrew, Greek, and English for a variety of situations. Here are a few common situations that it is used for.

- Ownership — Someone owns something.
 - 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.

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 \(UTA PDF\)](#)

▮ 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: [1 Peter 1:2](#); [1 Peter 1:3](#); [1 Peter 1:11](#); [1 Peter 1:13](#); [1 Peter 1:14](#); [1 Peter 1:24](#); [1 Peter 2:8](#); [1 Peter 2:19](#); [1 Peter 3:4](#); [1 Peter 3:7](#); [1 Peter 3:13](#); [1 Peter 3:14](#); [1 Peter 4:10](#); [1 Peter 4:17](#); [1 Peter 5:3](#); [1 Peter 5:4](#); [1 Peter 5:10](#)

Pronouns — When to Use Them

Description

When we talk or write, we use pronouns to refer to people or things without always having to repeat the noun or name. Usually, the first time we refer to someone in a story, we use a descriptive phrase or a name. The next time we might refer to that person with a simple noun or by name. After that we might refer to him simply with a pronoun as long as we think that our listeners will be able to understand easily to whom the pronoun refers.

This page answers the question: *How do I decide whether or not to use a pronoun?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. **This man** came to Jesus at night. Jesus replied and said to **him** ... (John 3:1, 2a, 3a ULT)

In John 3, Nicodemus is first referred to with noun phrases and his name. Then he is referred to with the noun phrase “this man.” Then he is referred to with the pronoun “him.”

Each language has its rules and exceptions to this usual way of referring to people and things.

- In some languages, the first time something is referred to in a paragraph or chapter, it is referred to with a noun rather than a pronoun.
- The main character is the person whom a story is about. In some languages, after a main character is introduced in a story, he is usually referred to with a pronoun. Some languages have special pronouns that refer only to the main character.
- In some languages, marking on the verb helps people know who the subject is. (See [Verbs](#).) In some of these languages, listeners rely on this marking to help them understand who the subject is. Speakers will use a pronoun, noun phrase, or proper name only when they want either to emphasize or to clarify who the subject is.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- If translators use a pronoun at the wrong time for their language, readers might not know about whom the writer is talking.
- If translators too frequently refer to a main character by name, listeners of some languages might not realize that the person is a main character, or they might think that there is a new character with the same name.
- If translators use pronouns, nouns, or names at the wrong time, people might think that there is some special emphasis on the person or thing to which it refers.

Examples From the Bible

The example below occurs at the beginning of a chapter. In some languages it might not be clear to whom the pronouns refer.

Then Jesus entered into the synagogue again, and there was a man who had a withered hand. Some people watched **him** closely to see if **he** would heal **him** on the Sabbath so that they might accuse **him**. (Mark 3:1-2 ULT)

In the example below, two men are named in the first sentence. It might not be clear whom “he” in the second sentence refers to.

Now after some days had passed, **King Agrippa** and Bernice came down to Caesarea to pay their respects to **Festus**. After **he** had been there for many days, Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul. (Acts 25:13-14)

Jesus is the main character of the book of Matthew, but in the verses below he is referred to four times by name. This may lead speakers of some languages to think that Jesus is not the main character. Or it might lead them to think that there is more than one person named Jesus in this story. Or it might lead them to think that there is some kind of emphasis on him, even though there is no emphasis.

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **Jesus** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.
- (2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If it would not be clear to your readers to whom or to what a pronoun refers, use a name or a noun.

Again **he** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **him** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath. (Mark 3:1-2)

Again **Jesus** walked into the synagogue, and a man with a withered hand was there. Some Pharisees watched **Jesus** to see if **he** would heal the man on the Sabbath.

- (2) If repeating a noun or name would lead people to think that a main character is not a main character, or that the writer is talking about more than one person with that name, or that there is some kind of emphasis on someone when there is no emphasis, use a pronoun instead.

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **Jesus**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **Jesus** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **Jesus** left from there and went into their synagogue. (Matthew 12:1-3,9 ULT)

This may be translated as:

At that time **Jesus** went on the Sabbath day through the grainfields. **His** disciples were hungry and began to pluck heads of grain and eat them. But when the Pharisees saw that, they said to **him**, “See, your disciples do what is unlawful to do on the Sabbath.” But **he** said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was hungry, and the men who were with him?” Then **he** left from there and went into their synagogue.

”

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:6](#); [1 Peter 2:4](#); [1 Peter 2:14](#); [1 Peter 3:3](#); [1 Peter 3:21](#); [1 Peter 5:12](#)

Quotations and Quote Margins

Description

This page answers the question: *What are quote margins and where should I put them?*

When saying that someone said something, we often tell who spoke, whom they spoke to, and what they said. The information about who spoke and whom they spoke to is called the quote margin. What the person said is the quotation. (This is also called a quote.) In some languages the quote margin may come first, last, or even in between two parts of the quotation.

The quote margins are bolded below.

- **She said**, “The food is ready. Come and eat.”
- “The food is ready. Come and eat,” **she said**.
- “The food is ready,” **she said**. “Come and eat.”

Also in some languages, the quote margin may have more than one verb meaning “said.”

But his mother **answered** and **said**, “No. Rather, he will be called John.” (Luke 1:60 ULT)

When writing that someone said something, some languages put the quote (what was said) in quotation marks called inverted commas (“ ”). Some languages use other symbols around the quotation, such as these angle quote marks (« »), or something else.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to put the quote margin where it is most clear and natural in their language.
- Translators need to decide whether they want the quote margin to have one or two verbs meaning “said.”
- Translators need to decide which marks to use around the quotation.

Examples From the Bible

Quote margin before the quote

Then Zechariah said to the angel, “How will I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in her days.” (Luke 1:18 ULT)

Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and **they said to him**, “Teacher, what should we do?” (Luke 3:12 ULT)

So **he said to them**, “Collect nothing more than what you have been ordered.” (Luke 3:13 ULT)

Quote margin after the quote

Yahweh relented concerning this. “It will not happen,” **he said**. (Amos 7:3 ULT)

Quote margin between two parts of the quote

“I will hide my face from them,” **he said**, “and I will see what their end will be; for they are a perverse generation, children who are unfaithful.” (Deuteronomy 32:20 ULT)

For look, days are coming—**this is Yahweh’s declaration**—when I will restore the fortunes of my people, Israel and Judah. (Jeremiah 30:3a ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) Decide where to put the quote margin.
- (2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning "said."

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Decide where to put the quote margin.

He said, "Therefore, those among you who are leaders should go down with us. If there is something wrong with the man, let them accuse him." (Acts 25:5 ULT)

"Therefore, those who can should go there with us," **he said**. "If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

"Therefore, those who can should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him," **he said**.

"Therefore, those who can," **he said**, "should go there with us. If there is something wrong with the man, you should accuse him."

- (2) Decide whether to use one or two words meaning "said."

But his mother **answered and said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John." (Luke 1:60 ULT)

But his mother **replied**, "No. Rather, he will be called John."

But his mother **said**, "No. Rather, he will be called John."

But his mother **answered** like this. "No. Rather, he will be called John," she **said**.

Next we recommend you learn about: "

Direct and Indirect Quotations ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:16](#); [1 Peter 1:24](#); [1 Peter 2:6](#); [1 Peter 2:8](#); [1 Peter 3:10](#); [1 Peter 4:18](#); [1 Peter 5:5](#)

Quote Markings

Description

Some languages use quotation marks to mark off direct quotes from the rest of the text. English uses the mark " immediately before a quote and " immediately after it.

- John said, "I do not know when I will arrive."

Quotation marks are not used with indirect quotes.

- John said that he did not know when he would arrive.

When there are several layers of quotations inside of other quotations, it might be hard for readers to understand who is saying what. Alternating two kinds of quotation marks can help careful readers to keep track of them. In English, the outermost quotation has double quote marks, and the next quotation within it has single marks. If there is a third embedded quote, that quotation again has double quotation marks.

- Mary said, "John said, 'I do not know when I will arrive.'"
- Bob said, "Mary told me, 'John said, "I do not know when I will arrive.''"

Some languages use other kinds of quotation marks: Here are some examples: , ' ' " " < > « » 7 — .

Examples From the Bible

The examples below show the kind of quotation markings used in the ULT.

A quotation with only one layer

A first layer direct quote has double quotation marks around it.

So the king replied, "That is Elijah the Tishbite." (2 Kings 1:8b ULT)

Quotations with two layers

A second layer direct quote has single quotation marks around it. We have printed it and the phrase in bold type for you to see them clearly.

They asked him, "Who is the man who said to you, '**Pick it up and walk?**'" (John 5:12 ULT)

He sent two of the disciples, saying, "Go into the village ahead of you. As you enter, you will find a colt that has never been ridden. Untie it and bring it to me. If any one asks you, '**Why are you untying it?**' you will say thus, '**The Lord has need of it.**'" (Luke 19:29b-31 ULT)

A quotation with three layers

A third layer direct quote has double quotation marks around it. We have printed it in bold type for you to see them clearly.

Abraham said, "Because I thought, '**Surely there is no fear of God in this place, and they will kill me because of my wife.**' Besides, she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. When God caused me to leave my father's

This page answers the question: *How can quotes be marked, especially when there are quotes within quotes?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Direct and Indirect Quotations \(UTA PDF\)](#)

house and travel from place to place, I said to her, 'You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, "**He is my brother.**"' (Genesis 20:11-13 ULT)

A quotation with four layers

A fourth layer direct quote has single quotation marks around it. We have printed it in bold for you to see it clearly.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: '**Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.**' " " " (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

Quote Marking Strategies

Here are some ways you may be able to help readers see where each quote starts and ends so they can more easily know who said what.

- (1) Alternate two kinds of quote marks to show layers of direct quotation. English alternates double quote marks and single quote marks.
- (2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes in order to use fewer quote marks, since indirect quotes do not need them. (See [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#).)
- (3) If a quotation is very long and has many layers of quotation in it, indent the main overall quote, and use quote marks only for the direct quotes inside of it.

Examples of Quote Marking Strategies Applied

- (1) Alternate two kinds of quotation marks to show layers of direct quotation as shown in the ULT text below.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'" " (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

- (2) Translate one or more of the quotes as indirect quotes in order to use fewer quotation marks, since indirect quotes do not need them. In English, the word "that" can introduce an indirect quote. In the example below, everything after the word "that" is an indirect quote of what the messengers said to the king. Within that indirect quote, there are some direct quotes marked with double and single quotation marks.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'" " (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

They told him **that** a man came to meet them who said to them, "Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, 'Yahweh says this: "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'" "

- (3) If a quotation is very long and has many layers of quotation in it, indent the main overall quote, and use quote marks only for the direct quotes inside of it.

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, "Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'" " (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

They said to him,

A man came to meet us who said to us, "Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, 'Yahweh says this: "Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'""

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Quotes within Quotes \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:24](#); [1 Peter 1:25](#); [1 Peter 2:3](#); [1 Peter 2:6](#); [1 Peter 2:7](#); [1 Peter 2:8](#); [1 Peter 2:9](#); [1 Peter 2:10](#); [1 Peter 2:22](#); [1 Peter 2:24](#); [1 Peter 3:10](#); [1 Peter 3:12](#); [1 Peter 3:14](#); [1 Peter 4:18](#); [1 Peter 5:5](#)

Reflexive Pronouns

Description

All languages have ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. English does this by using reflexive pronouns. These are pronouns that refer to someone or something that has already been mentioned in a sentence. In English the reflexive pronouns are: “myself,” “yourself,” “himself,” “herself,” “itself,” “ourselves,” “yourselves,” and “themselves.” Other languages may have other ways to show this.

This page answers the question: *What are reflexive pronouns?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of showing that the same person fills two different roles in a sentence. For those languages, translators will need to know how to translate the English reflexive pronouns.
- The reflexive pronouns in English also have other functions.

Uses of Reflexive Pronouns

- To show that the same person or things fills two different roles in a sentence
- To emphasize a person or thing in the sentence
- To show that someone did something alone
- To show that someone or something was alone

Examples From the Bible

Reflexive pronouns are used to show the same person or thing fills two different roles in a sentence.

If **I** should testify about **myself**, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31 ULT)

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and **many** went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to purify **themselves**. (John 11:55 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to emphasize a person or thing in the sentence.

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2 ULT)

So they left the crowd, taking Jesus with them, just as he was, in the boat. There also were other boats with him. Then a violent windstorm arose and the waves were breaking into the boat so that the boat was already full of water. But **Jesus himself** was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. (Mark 4:36-38a ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone did something alone.

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15 ULT)

Reflexive pronouns are used to show that someone or something was alone.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. **It** was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

Translation Strategies

If a reflexive pronoun would have the same function in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other strategies.

(1) In some languages people put something on the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject. (2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence. (3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it. (4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.” (5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) In some languages people modify the verb to show that the object of the verb is the same as the subject.

If I should testify about **myself** alone, my testimony would not be true. (John 5:31)

“If I should **self-testify** alone, my testimony would not be true.”

Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem from the country before the Passover in order to **purify themselves**. (John 11:55)

“Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out from country before the Passover in order to **self-purify**.”

(2) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by referring to it in a special place in the sentence.

He himself took our sickness and bore our diseases. (Matthew 8:17 ULT)

“**It was he who** took our sickness and bore our diseases.”

Jesus himself was not baptizing, but his disciples were. (John 4:2)

“**It was not Jesus who** was baptizing, but his disciples were.”

(3) In some languages people emphasize a certain person or thing by adding something to that word or putting another word with it. English adds the reflexive pronoun.

But Jesus said this to test Philip, for he **himself** knew what he was going to do. (John 6:6)

(4) In some languages people show that someone did something alone by using a word like “alone.”

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again up the mountain **by himself**. (John 6:15)

“When Jesus realized that they were about to come and seize him by force to make him king, he withdrew again **alone** up the mountain.”

(5) In some languages people show that something was alone by using a phrase that tells about where it was.

He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up in a place **by itself**. (John 20:6b-7 ULT)

“He saw the linen cloths lying there and the cloth that had been on his head. It was not lying with the linen cloths but was folded up and lying **in its own place**.”

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 2:24](#)

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.

But you, why do you judge your brother? And you also, why do you despise your brother? (Romans 14:10 ULT)

Paul used these rhetorical questions **to rebuke** the Romans for doing what they should not do.

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 express surprise or other emotion? 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!

But you, **why do you judge your brother?** And you also, **why do you despise your brother?** (Romans 14:10 ULT)

Do you think it is good to judge your brother? Do you think it is good to despise your brother?

..

Referenced in: [1 Peter 2:20](#); [1 Peter 3:13](#); [1 Peter 4:17](#); [1 Peter 4:18](#)

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 lighting flashes suddenly and everyone can see it, the Son of Man will come suddenly and everyone will be able to see him. No one will have to be told about it.

Translation Strategies

If people would understand the correct meaning of a simile, consider using it. If they would not, here are some strategies you can use:

(1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience. (2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote. (3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If people do not know how the two items are alike, tell how they are alike. However, do not do this if the meaning was not clear to the original audience.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — This compares the danger that Jesus' disciples would be in with the danger that sheep are in when they are surrounded by wolves.

See, I send **you out among wicked people** and you will be in danger from them **as sheep are in danger when they are among wolves**.

For the word of God is living and active and sharper **than any two-edged sword**. (Hebrews 4:12a ULT)

For the word of God is living and active and **more powerful than a very sharp two-edged sword**.

(2) If people are not familiar with the item that something is compared to, use an item from your own culture. Be sure that it is one that could have been used in the cultures of the Bible. If you use this strategy, you may want to put the original item in a footnote.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**, (Matthew 10:16a ULT) — If people do not know what sheep and wolves are, or that wolves kill and eat sheep, you could use some other animal that kills another.

See, I send you out **as chickens in the midst of wild dogs**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to gather your children together, **as a mother closely watches over her infants**, but you refused!

If you have faith **as a grain of mustard** ... (Matthew 17:20)

If you have faith even as small **as a tiny seed**,

(3) Simply describe the item without comparing it to another.

See, I send you out **as sheep in the midst of wolves**. (Matthew 10:16a ULT)

See, I send you out among **people who will want to harm you**.

How often did I long to gather your children together, just **as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings**, but you were not willing! (Matthew 23:37b ULT)

How often I wanted to **protect you**, but you refused!

Next we recommend you learn about:

Metaphor (UTA PDF)

Biblical Imagery — Common Patterns (UTA PDF)

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:19](#); [1 Peter 1:24](#); [1 Peter 2:2](#); [1 Peter 2:5](#); [1 Peter 2:25](#); [1 Peter 5 General Notes](#); [1 Peter 5:8](#)

Statements — Other Uses

Description

Normally statements are used to give information. Sometimes they are used in the Bible for other functions.

This page answers the question: *What other uses are there for statements?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Sentence Types \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Some languages would not use a statement for some of the functions that statements are used for in the Bible.

Examples From the Bible

Statements are normally used to give **information**. All of the sentences in John 1:6-8 below are statements, and their function is to give information.

There was a man who was sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness in order to testify about the light, that all might believe through him. John was not the light, but came that he might testify about the light. (John 1:6-8 ULT)

A statement can also be used as a **command** to tell someone what to do. In the examples below, the high priest used statements with the verb “will” to tell people what to do.

He commanded them, saying, “This is what you **must** do. A third of you who come on the Sabbath **will** keep watch over the king’s house, and a third **will** be at the Sur Gate, and a third at the gate behind the guardhouse.” (2 Kings 11:5 ULT)

A statement can also be used to give **instructions**. The speaker below was not just telling Joseph about something Joseph would do in the future; he was telling Joseph what he needed to do.

She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

A statement can also be used to make a **request**. The man with leprosy was not just saying what Jesus was able to do. He was also asking Jesus to heal him.

Behold, a leper came to him and bowed before him, saying, “Lord, if you are willing, **you are able to make me clean.**” (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

A statement can also be used to **perform** something. By telling Adam that the ground was cursed because of him, God actually cursed it.

... **cursed is the ground** because of you; (Genesis 3:17b ULT)

By telling a man that his sins were forgiven, **Jesus forgave** the man’s sins.

When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “**Son, your sins are forgiven.**” (Mark 2:5 ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a sentence type** that would express that function.
- (2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **add a sentence type** that would express that function.

(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, **use a verb form** that would express that function.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a sentence type that would express that function.

She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

The phrase “you will call his name Jesus” is an instruction. It can be translated using the sentence type of a normal instruction.

She will give birth to a son. **Name him Jesus**, because he will save his people from their sins.

(2) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, add a sentence type that would express that function.

Lord, if you are willing, **you are able to make me clean**. (Matthew 8:2 ULT)

The function of “you are able” is to make a request. In addition to the statement, a request can be added.

Lord, you are able to make me clean. If you are willing, **please do so**.
OR:
Lord, if you are willing, **please heal me**. I know that you are able to do so.

(3) If the function of a statement would not be understood correctly in your language, use a verb form that would express that function.

She will give birth to a son, and **you will call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21 ULT)

She will give birth to a son, and **you must call his name Jesus**, for he will save his people from their sins.

Son, your sins are forgiven. (Mark 2:5 ULT)

Son, I forgive your sins.
OR:
Son, God hereby forgives your sins.

”

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:3](#); [1 Peter 1:13](#); [1 Peter 1:14](#); [1 Peter 1:16](#); [1 Peter 2:1](#); [1 Peter 2:12](#)

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: [1 Peter 5:14](#)

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: [1 Peter 5:13](#)

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: [1 Peter 1:9](#); [1 Peter 1:22](#); [1 Peter 2:24](#); [1 Peter 2:25](#); [1 Peter 3:10](#); [1 Peter 3:12](#); [1 Peter 4:19](#)

Textual Variants

Description

Thousands of years ago, people wrote the books of the Bible. Other people then copied them by hand and translated them. They did this work very carefully, and over the years many people made thousands of copies. However, people who looked at them later saw that there were small differences between them. Some copiers accidentally left out some words, or some mistook one word for another that looked like it. Occasionally, they added words or even whole sentences, either by accident or because they wanted to explain something. Modern Bibles are translations of the old copies. Some modern Bibles include some of these sentences that were added. In the ULT, these added sentences are usually written in footnotes.

Bible scholars have read many old copies and compared them with each other. For each place in the Bible where there was a difference, they have figured out which wordings are most likely correct. The translators of the ULT based the ULT on wordings that scholars say are most likely correct. Because people who use the ULT may have access to Bibles that are based on other copies, the ULT translators have sometimes included information about some of the differences between them, either in the ULT footnotes or in the unfoldingWord® Translation Notes.

Translators are encouraged to translate the text in the ULT and to write about added sentences in footnotes, as is done in the ULT. However, if the local church really wants those sentences to be included in the main text, translators may put them in the text and include a footnote about them.

This page answers the question: *Why does the ULT have missing or added verses, and should I translate them?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Choosing a Source Text \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Original Manuscripts \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Examples From the Bible

Matthew 18:10-11 ULT has a footnote about verse 11.

¹⁰ See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I say to you that in heaven their angels always look on the face of my Father who is in heaven. ¹¹ ^[1]

[1] Many authorities, some ancient, insert v. 11: **For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost.**

John 7:53-8:11 is not in the best earliest manuscripts. It has been included in the ULT, but it is marked off with square brackets ([]) at the beginning and end, and there is a footnote after verse 11.

53 [Then everyone went to his own house ... 11 She said, "No one, Lord." Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more."] ^[2]

[2] Some ancient manuscripts include John 7:53-8:11

Translation Strategies

When there is a textual variant, you may choose to follow the ULT or another version that you have access to.

- (1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.
- (2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

The translation strategies are applied to Mark 7:14-16 ULT, which has a footnote about verse 16.

¹⁴ He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” ¹⁶ [1]

[1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(1) Translate the verses as they are in the ULT and include the footnote that the ULT provides.

¹⁴ He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man.” ¹⁶ [1]

[1] Some ancient manuscripts include verse 16: **If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.**

(2) Translate the verses as another version has them, and change the footnote so that it fits this situation.

¹⁴ He called the crowd again and said to them, “Listen to me, all of you, and understand. ¹⁵ There is nothing from outside the man that can defile him when it enters into him. But the things that come out of the man are the things that defile the man. ¹⁶ If any man has ears to hear, let him hear.” [1]

[1] Some ancient manuscripts do not include verse 16.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Chapter and Verse Numbers \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Original Manuscripts \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Terms to Know \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[The Original and Source Languages \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Introduction to 1 Peter](#)

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: [1 Peter 4:15](#)

Translating Son and Father

Door43 supports Bible translations that represent these concepts when they refer to God.

Biblical Witness

“Father” and “Son” are names that God calls himself in the Bible.

The Bible shows that God called Jesus his Son:

After he was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water, and ... a voice came out of the heavens saying, **“This is my beloved Son.** I am very pleased with him.” (Matthew 3:16-17 ULT)

The Bible shows that Jesus called God his Father:

Jesus ... said, “I praise you **Father**, Lord of heaven and earth ... no one knows the **Son** except the **Father**, and no one knows the **Father** except the **Son.**” (Matthew 11:25a, 27b ULT) (See also: John 6:26-57)

Christians have found that “Father” and “Son” are the ideas that most essentially describe the eternal relationship of the First and Second Persons of the Trinity to each other. The Bible indeed refers to them in various ways, but no other terms reflect the eternal love and intimacy between these Persons, nor the interdependent eternal relationship between them.

Jesus referred to God in the following terms:

Baptize them into **the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.** (Matthew 28:19b ULT)

The intimate, loving relationship between the Father and the Son is eternal, just as they are eternal. The Father **loves** the Son. (See John 3:35-36; 5:19-20 ULT)

I love the Father, and just as the Father commanded me, thus I do. (John 14:31 ULT)

No one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son. (Luke 10:22b ULT)

The terms “Father” and “Son” also communicate that the Father and the Son are of the same essence; they are both eternal God.

Jesus said, “Father, ... glorify your Son so that the Son will glorify you ... I glorified you on the earth ... Now Father, glorify me ... with the glory that **I had with you before the world was made.**” (John 17:1, 4a, 5 ULT)

But in these last days, {God the Father} has spoken to us through a Son, whom he appointed to be the heir of all things. Through him, he also made the universe. He is the brightness of God’s glory and **the very exact representation of his being.** He holds everything together by the word of his power. (Hebrews 1:2-3a ULT)

Jesus said to him, “I have been with you for so long and you still do not know me, Philip? **Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.** How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” (John 14:9 ULT)

This page answers the question: *Why are these concepts important in referring to God?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

Create Faithful Translations ([UTA PDF](#))

Son of God and God the Father ([UTA PDF](#))

Human Relationships

Human fathers and sons are not perfect, but the Bible still uses those terms for the Father and Son, who are perfect.

Just as today, human father-son relationships during Bible times were never as loving or perfect as the relationship between Jesus and his Father. But this does not mean that the translator should avoid the concepts of father and son. The Scriptures use these terms to refer to God, the perfect Father and Son, as well as to sinful human fathers and sons. In referring to God as Father and Son, choose words in your language that are widely used to refer to a human "father" and "son." In this way you will communicate that God the Father and God the Son are of the same divine essence (they are both God), just as a human father and son are of the same human essence (they are both human and share the same human characteristics).

Translation Strategies

- (1) Think through all the possibilities within your language to translate the words "son" and "father." Determine which words in your language best represent the divine "Son" and "Father."
- (2) If your language has more than one word for "son," use the word that has the closest meaning to "only son" (or "first son" if necessary).
- (3) If your language has more than one word for "father," use the word that has the closest meaning to "birth father," rather than "adoptive father."

(See *God the Father and Son of God* pages in [unfoldingWord® Translation Words](#) for help translating "Father" and "Son.")

"

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:2](#); [1 Peter 1:3](#)

When Masculine Words Include Women

In the Bible, sometimes the words “men,” “brothers,” and “sons” refer only to men. At other times, those words include both men and women. In those places where the writer meant both men and women, you (the translator) need to translate it in a way that does not limit the meaning to men.

Description

In some languages a word that normally refers to men can also be used in a more general way to refer to both men and women. For example, the Bible sometimes says “brothers” when it refers to both brothers and sisters.

Also in some languages, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can be used in a more general way for any person if it is not important whether the person is a man or a woman. In the example below, the pronoun is “his,” but it is not limited to males.

A wise son makes **his** father rejoice but a foolish son brings grief to **his** mother. (Proverbs 10:1 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- In some cultures words like “man,” “brother,” and “son” can only be used to refer to men. If those words are used in a translation in a more general way, people will think that what is being said does not apply to women.
- In some cultures, the masculine pronouns “he” and “him” can only refer to men. If a masculine pronoun is used, people will think that what is said does not apply to women.

Translation Principles

When a statement applies to both men and women, translate it in such a way that people will be able to understand that it applies to both.

Examples From the Bible

Now we want you to know, **brothers**, the grace of God that has been given to the churches of Macedonia. (2 Corinthians 8:1 ULT)

This verse is addressing the believers in Corinth, not only men, but **men and women**.

Then said Jesus to his disciples, “If anyone wants to follow me, **he** must deny **himself**, take up **his** cross, and follow me.” (Matthew 16:24 ULT)

Jesus was not speaking only of men, but of **men and women**.

Caution: Sometimes masculine words are used specifically to refer to men. Do not use words that would lead people to think that they include women. The words below are specifically about men.

Moses said, ‘If **someone** dies, not having children, **his brother** must marry **his** wife and have children for **his brother**.’ (Matthew 22:24 ULT)

This page answers the question: *How do I translate “brother” or “he” when it could refer to anyone, male or female?*

In order to understand this topic, it would be good to read:

[Pronouns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Generic Noun Phrases \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Translation Strategies

If people would understand that that masculine words like “man,” “brother,” and “he” can include women, then consider using them. Otherwise, here are some ways for translating those words when they include women.

- (1) Use a noun that can be used for both men and women.
- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.
- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use nouns that can be used for both men and women.

The wise **man** dies just like the fool dies. (Ecclesiastes 2:16b ULT)

“The wise **person** dies just like the fool dies.” “Wise **people** die just like fools die.”

- (2) Use a word that refers to men and a word that refers to women.

For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia. (2 Corinthians 1:8) — Paul was writing this letter to both men and women.

“For we do not want you to be uninformed, **brothers and sisters**, about the troubles that happened to us in Asia.”

- (3) Use pronouns that can be used for both men and women.

“If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.”
(Matthew 16:24 ULT)

English speakers can change the masculine singular pronouns, “he,” “himself,” and “his” to plural pronouns that do not mark gender, “they,” “themselves,” and “their” in order to show that it applies to all people, not just men.

“If **people** want to follow me, **they** must deny **themselves**, take up **their** cross, and follow me.”

”

Referenced in: [1 Peter 1:22](#); [1 Peter 2:4](#); [1 Peter 3:8](#); [1 Peter 4:2](#); [1 Peter 4:6](#); [1 Peter 5:12](#)



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 79

eternity, everlasting, eternal, forever

Definition:

The terms “everlasting” and “eternal” have very similar meanings and refer to something that will always exist or that lasts forever.

- The term “eternity” refers to a state of being that has no beginning or end. It can also refer to life that never ends.
- After this present life on earth, humans will spend eternity either in heaven with God or in hell apart from God.
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” are used in the New Testament to refer to living forever with God in heaven.

The term “forever” refers to never-ending time.

- The phrase “forever and ever” has the idea of time that never ends and expresses what eternity or eternal life is like. It emphasizes that something will always happen or exist. It refers to time that never ends.
- God said that David’s throne would last “forever.” This is referred to the fact that David’s descendant Jesus will reign as king forever.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways to translate “eternal” or “everlasting” could include “unending” or “never stopping” or “always continuing.”
- The terms “eternal life” and “everlasting life” could also be translated as “life that never ends” or “life that continues without stopping” or “the raising up of our bodies to live forever.”
- Depending on the context, different ways to translate “eternity” could include “existing outside of time” or “unending life” or “life in heaven.”
- Also consider how this word is translated in a Bible translation in a local or national language. (See: [How to Translate Unknowns](#))
- “Forever” could also be translated by “always” or “never ending.”
- The phrase “will last forever” could also be translated as “always exist” or “will never stop” or “will always continue.”
- The emphatic phrase “forever and ever” could also be translated as “for always and always” or “not ever ending” or “which never, ever ends.”
- David’s throne lasting forever could be translated as “David’s descendant will reign forever” or “a descendant of David will always be reigning.”

(See also: [David](#), [reign](#), [life](#))

Bible References:

- Genesis 17:8
- Genesis 48:4
- Exodus 15:17
- 2 Samuel 3:28-30
- 1 Kings 2:32-33
- Job 4:20-21
- Psalms 21:4
- Isaiah 9:6-7
- Isaiah 40:27-28
- Daniel 7:18

- Luke 18:18
- Acts 13:46
- Romans 5:21
- Hebrews 6:19-20
- Hebrews 10:11-14
- 1 John 1:2
- 1 John 5:12
- Revelation 1:4-6
- Revelation 22:3-5

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **27:1** One day, an expert in the Jewish law came to Jesus to test him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit **eternal life**?”
- **28:1** One day, a rich young ruler came up to Jesus and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to have **eternal life**?” Jesus said to him, “Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good, and that is God. But if you want to have **eternal life**, obey God’s laws.”
- **28:10** Jesus answered, “Everyone who has left houses, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or property for my name’s sake, will receive 100 times more and will also receive **eternal life**.”

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H3117, H4481, H5331, H5703, H5705, H5769, H5865, H5957, H6924, G01260, G01650, G01660, G13360

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Referenced in: [1 Peter 1 General Notes](#)

foundation, founder, founded

Definition:

Used in this sense, the verb “found” means build, create, or lay a base for. The phrase “founded on” means supported by or based on. A “foundation” is the base of support on which something is built or created.

- The foundation of a house or building must be strong and dependable in order to support the entire structure.
- The term “foundation” can also refer to the beginning of something or to the time when something was first created.
- A “foundation stone” was a stone that was laid as part of the foundation. These stones were tested to make sure they were strong enough to support an entire building.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “before the foundation of the world” could be translated as “before the creation of the world” or “before the time when the world first existed” or “before everything was first created.”
- The term “founded on” could be translated as “securely built on” or “firmly based on.”
- Depending on the context, “foundation” could be translated as “strong base” or “solid support” or “beginning” or “creation.”

(See also: [cornerstone](#), [create](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Kings 6:37-38
- 2 Chronicles 3:1-3
- Ezekiel 13:13-14
- Luke 14:29
- Matthew 13:35
- Matthew 25:34

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0134, H0787, H2713, H3245, H3247, H3248, H4143, H4144, H4146, H4328, H4349, H4527, H8356, G23100, G23110, G26020

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Referenced in: [1 Peter 2 General Notes](#)

godly, godliness, ungodly, godless, ungodliness, godlessness

Definition:

The term “godly” is used to describe a person who acts in a way that honors God and shows what God is like. “Godliness” is the character quality of honoring God by doing his will.

- A person who has godly character will show the fruits of the Holy Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and self control.
- The quality of godliness shows that a person has the Holy Spirit and is obeying him.

The terms “ungodly” and “godless” describe people who are in rebellion against God. Living in an evil way, without thought of God, is called “ungodliness” or “godlessness.”

- The meanings of these words are very similar. However, “godless” and “godlessness” may describe a more extreme condition in which people or nations do not even acknowledge God or his right to rule them.
- God pronounces judgment and wrath on ungodly people, on everyone who rejects him and his ways.

Translation Suggestions:

- The phrase “the godly” could be translated as “godly people” or “people who obey God.” (See: [nominaladj](#))
- The adjective “godly” could be translated as “obedient to God” or “righteous” or “pleasing to God.”
- The phrase “in a godly manner” could be translated as “in a way that obeys God” or “with actions and words that please God.”
- Ways to translate “godliness” could include “acting in a way that pleases God” or “obeying God” or “living in a righteous manner.”
- Depending on the context, the term “ungodly” could be translated as “displeasing to God” or “immoral” or “disobeying God.”
- The terms “godless” and “godlessness” literally mean that the people are “without God” or “having no thought of God” or “acting in a way that does not acknowledge God.”
- Other ways to translate “ungodliness” or “godlessness” could be “wickedness” or “evil” or “rebellion against God”.

(See also [evil](#), [honor](#), [obey](#), [righteous](#), [righteous](#))

Bible References:

- Job 27:10
- Proverbs 11:9
- Acts 3:12
- 1 Timothy 1:9-11
- 1 Timothy 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:12
- Hebrews 12:14-17
- Hebrews 11:7
- 1 Peter 4:18
- Jude 1:16

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H1100, H2623, H5760, H7563, G05160, G07630, G07640, G07650, G21240, G21500, G21520, G21530, G23160, G23170

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Referenced in: [1 Peter 4 General Notes](#)

holy, holiness, unholy, sacred

Definition:

The terms "holy" and "holiness" refer to the character of God that is totally set apart and separated from everything that is sinful and imperfect.

- Only God is absolutely holy. He makes people and things holy.
- A person who is holy belongs to God and has been set apart for the purpose of serving God and bringing him glory.
- An object that God has declared to be holy is one that he has set apart for his glory and use, such as an altar that is for the purpose of offering sacrifices to him.
- People cannot approach him unless he allows them to, because he is holy and they are merely human beings, sinful and imperfect.
- In the Old Testament, God set apart the priests as holy for special service to him. They had to be ceremonially cleansed from sin in order to approach God.
- God also set apart as holy certain places and things that belonged to him or in which he revealed himself, such as his temple.

Literally, the term "unholy" means "not holy." It describes someone or something that does not honor God.

- This word is used to describe someone who dishonors God by rebelling against him.
- A thing that is called "unholy" could be described as being common, profane or unclean. It does not belong to God.

The term "sacred" describes something that relates to worshiping God or to the pagan worship of false gods.

- In the Old Testament, the term "sacred" was oftentimes used to describe the stone pillars and other objects used in the worship of false gods. This could also be translated as "religious."
- "Sacred songs" and "sacred music" refer to music that was sung or played for God's glory. This could be translated as "music for worshiping Yahweh" or "songs that praise God."
- The phrase "sacred duties" referred to the "religious duties" or "rituals" that a priest performed to lead people in worshiping God. It could also refer to the rituals performed by a pagan priest to worship a false god.

Translation Suggestions:

- Ways to translate "holy" might include "set apart for God" or "belonging to God" or "completely pure" or "perfectly sinless" or "separated from sin."
- To "make holy" is often translated as "sanctify" in English. It could also be translated as "set apart (someone) for God's glory."
- Ways to translate "unholy" could include "not holy" or "not belonging to God" or "not honoring to God" or "not godly."
- In some contexts, "unholy" could be translated as "unclean."

(See also: [Holy Spirit](#), [consecrate](#), [sanctify](#), set apart)

Bible References:

- Genesis 28:22
- 2 Kings 3:2
- Lamentations 4:1
- Ezekiel 20:18-20
- Matthew 7:6

- Mark 8:38
- Acts 7:33
- Acts 11:8
- Romans 1:2
- 2 Corinthians 12:3-5
- Colossians 1:22
- 1 Thessalonians 3:13
- 1 Thessalonians 4:7
- 2 Timothy 3:15

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **1:16** He (God) blessed the seventh day and made it **holy**, because on this day he rested from his work.
- **9:12** "You are standing on **holy** ground."
- **13:1** "If you will obey me and keep my covenant, you will be my prized possession, a kingdom of priests, and a **holy** nation."
- **13:5** "Always be sure to keep the Sabbath day **holy**."
- **22:5** "So the baby will be **holy**, the Son of God."
- **50:2** As we wait for Jesus to return, God wants us to live in a way that is **holy** and that honors him.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0430, H2455, H2623, H4676, H4720, H6918, H6922, H6942, H6944, H6948, G00370, G00380, G00400, G00400, G00410, G00420, G04620, G18590, G21500, G24120, G24130, G28390, G37410, G37420

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Referenced in: [1 Peter 1 General Notes](#)

Peter, Simon Peter, Cephas

Facts:

Peter was one of Jesus' twelve apostles. He was an important leader of the early Church.

- Before Jesus called him to be his disciple, Peter's name was Simon.
- Later, Jesus also named him "Cephas," which means "stone" or "rock" in the Aramaic language. The name Peter also means "stone" or "rock" in the Greek language.
- God worked through Peter to heal people and to preach the good news about Jesus.
- Two books in the New Testament are letters that Peter wrote to encourage and teach fellow believers.

(Translation suggestions: [How to Translate Names](#))

(See also: [disciple](#), [apostle](#))

Bible References:

- Acts 8:25
- Galatians 2:6-8
- Galatians 2:12
- Luke 22:58
- Mark 3:16
- Matthew 4:18-20
- Matthew 8:14
- Matthew 14:30
- Matthew 26:33-35

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **28:9** Peter said to Jesus, "We have left everything and followed you. What will be our reward?"
- **29:1** One day Peter asked Jesus, "Master, how many times should I forgive my brother when he sins against me? As many as seven times?"
- **31:5** Then Peter said to Jesus, "Master, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." Jesus told Peter, "Come!"
- **36:1** One day, Jesus took three of his disciples, Peter, James, and John with him.
- **38:9** Peter replied, "Even if all the others abandon you, I will not!" 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. Even so, tonight, before the rooster crows, you will deny that you even know me three times."
- **38:15** As the soldiers arrested Jesus, Peter pulled out his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest.
- **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."
- **44:8** Peter answered them, "This man stands before you healed by the power of Jesus the Messiah."

Word Data:

- Strong's: G27860, G40740, G46130

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Referenced in: [Introduction to 1 Peter](#)

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