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Table of Contents

unfoldingWord® Translation Notes	7
Job	7
Introduction to Job	8
Job 1	11
Job 2	34
Job 3	48
Job 4	75
Job 5	97
Job 6	126
Job 7	157
Job 8	179
Job 9	202
Job 10	238
Job 11	261
Job 12	282
Job 13	308
Job 14	337
Job 15	360
Job 16	397
Job 17	420
Job 18	438
Job 19	460
Job 20	491
Job 21	522
Job 22	558
Job 23	590
Job 24	608
Job 25	635
Job 26	642
Job 27	657
Job 28	681
Job 29	710
Job 30	736
Job 31	768
Job 32	810
Job 33	833
Job 34	868
Job 35	906
Job 36	923
Job 37	957
Job 38	982
Job 39	1024
Job 40	1055
Job 41	1080
Job 42	1115
unfoldingWord® Translation Academy	1133
Abstract Nouns	1134
Active or Passive	1136

Apostrophe	1139
Aside	1141
Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information	1143
Background Information	1147
Biblical Money	1150
Collective Nouns	1152
Connect — Contrast Relationship	1155
Connect — Hypothetical Conditions	1157
Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship	1159
Connect — Sequential Time Relationship	1161
Connecting Words and Phrases	1163
Direct and Indirect Quotations	1167
Double Negatives	1169
Doublet	1172
Ellipsis	1174
Euphemism	1177
Exclamations	1179
Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'	1181
First, Second or Third Person	1183
Forms of 'You' — Dual/Plural	1185
Forms of 'You' — Singular	1187
Generic Noun Phrases	1189
Go and Come	1191
Hendiadys	1193
How to Translate Names	1196
Hyperbole	1200
Hypothetical Situations	1204
Idiom	1207
Imperatives — Other Uses	1210
Information Structure	1213
Introduction of a New Event	1215
Introduction of New and Old Participants	1218
Irony	1221
Irregular Use of Tenses	1224
Kinship	1228
Litany	1230
Litotes	1232
Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit	1234
Merism	1236
Metaphor	1238
Metonymy	1244
Nominal Adjectives	1246
Oath Formulas	1248
Parallelism	1250
Personification	1253
Poetry	1255
Politeness	1258
Possession	1261
Predictive Past	1265
Pronouns — When to Use Them	1267
Proverbs	1270
Quotations and Quote Margins	1272

Quote Markings	1274
Quotes within Quotes	1277
Reduplication	1280
Rhetorical Question	1281
Sentence Structure	1285
Simile	1287
Statements — Other Uses	1290
Symbolic Action	1292
Synecdoche	1294
Translate Unknowns	1296
Unusual Uses of the Plural	1299
Verse Bridges	1301
When Masculine Words Include Women	1303
When to Keep Information Implicit	1305
unfoldingWord® Translation Words	1307
faith	1308
grace, gracious	1310
righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright,	1311
sin, sinful, sinner, sinning	1313
Contributors	1315
unfoldingWord® Translation Notes Contributors	1315
unfoldingWord® Literal Text Contributors	1321
unfoldingWord® Simplified Text Contributors	1322
unfoldingWord® Translation Academy Contributors	1323
unfoldingWord® Translation Words Contributors	1323
unfoldingWord® Translation Words Links Contributors	1324



unfoldingWord® Translation Notes

Job

Introduction to Job

Part 1: General Introduction

Outline of Job

Introduction (1:1–2:13)

- Background to Job's situation: He is righteous and wealthy (1:1–5)
- Yahweh allows Satan to test Job (1:6–2:10)

Job's friends speak to him a first time and Job replies (3:1–14:22)

Job's friends speak to him a second time and Job replies (15:1–21:34)

Job's friends speak to him a third time and Job replies (22:1–31:40)

Elihu speaks to Job (32:1–37:24)

Yahweh answers Job out of the whirlwind (38:1–41:34)

Conclusion (42:1–17)

- Job responds humbly
- Yahweh rebukes Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar (42:7–9)
- Yahweh restores Job to prosperity (42:10–17)

What is the book of Job about?

The book of Job is about a man named Job who experienced disaster even though he was faithful to Yahweh. Job speaks with three friends and asks why Yahweh has allowed him to experience trials and losses. The book teaches that we cannot understand all of Yahweh's ways, and when we suffer, it is more important to trust Yahweh than it is to understand the reason for the suffering.

What title should translators give to this book?

The book of Job is named for Job, the main character in the book. His name is not related to the English word "job." Translators might use the traditional title of "The Book of Job" or simply "Job." Or they may choose a different title such as "The Book About Job" or "The Book About a Man Named Job."

Who wrote the book of Job?

We do not know who wrote the book of Job. Many people suggest that Moses composed or compiled the book, but it may have been written after the time of Moses.

Part 2: Important Religious and Cultural Concepts

Does sin cause suffering?

When a person sins against Yahweh, that can cause the person to experience suffering. People in the ancient Near East generally believed that a person suffered because they or their ancestors had sinned against God. This is what many religions teach. However, the book of Job shows that a person may suffer even if he or she has not sinned. (See: **sin, sinful, sinner, sinning (p.1313)**)

Were Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar really Job's friends?

Job 2:11 describes Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar as the friends of Job. However, they did not succeed in comforting Job. Instead, they tried to persuade Job to say something about God that Job believed was not true. So we might wonder if it is right to translate the word as "friends." What they said did not help Job, because they did not understand the full truth about God. However, they did care about Job, and they did want to help him. In those ways, they did what friends would do, and in that sense the word "friends" is appropriate.

When did the events in the book of Job take place?

We do not know when the events in the book of Job took place. The story is set around the time of Abraham and Isaac in the book of Genesis. However, some verses are similar to verses in the books of Proverbs and Isaiah, which were written many centuries after Abraham and Isaac lived. It is possible that the book of Job was written at a later time to describe the events of an earlier time.

The "sea monster"

Ancient peoples seem to have been aware of a large, fierce creature that lived in the ocean. They referred to it as the "sea monster." People in Job's culture regarded the sea as the realm of watery chaos, and they associated this sea monster with that chaos. There are references to this creature in the book of Job under the names Leviathan in [3:8](#), the "sea monster" in [7:12](#), Rahab in [9:13](#) and [26:12](#), and the "fleeing serpent" in [26:13](#). The description of Leviathan in chapter 41 also seems to be a description of this same creature. Notes at these various places suggest how you might represent these references in your translation.

Part 3: Important Translation Issues

Is the book of Job difficult to translate?

The book of Job has many uncommon words and phrases. That makes parts of it hard to understand and translate. For this reason, translators may decide to translate this book after they have translated other books of the Bible. However, since the writer did not connect Job with a specific time or place in history, the translator may also decide to translate this book before other Old Testament books.

What style of writing is in the book of Job?

The author begins and ends the book of Job by relating what happened to Job in narrative form. In the rest of the book, the characters speak in poetry. In the ancient Near East, writers often used poetry to discuss matters of wisdom. The relationship of human conduct to human prosperity and suffering is an important theme in wisdom literature.

Hebrew poetry: parallelism

Hebrew poetry was based on repetition of meaning rather than on repetition of sound like poetry in some other languages. A speaker would typically say one phrase and then say another phrase (or two) that meant a similar thing, an opposite thing, or something supplementary. The subsequent phrase or phrases would advance the meaning of the first phrase in one of these ways. In many cases it would be good to show this to your readers by including all the phrases in your translation rather than combining them. However, if the repetition might be confusing, you could connect the phrases with a word that would show how the later phrase or phrases are advancing the meaning of the first one. Throughout the book, notes will model ways of doing this in various cases, although not in most cases. It is hoped that these illustrations will give translators an idea of what they could do in any given instance.

Hebrew poetry: chiasm

Hebrew poetry often uses a form known as “chiasm.” It will make a statement consisting of two elements. It will then make a parallel, contrasting, or supplemental statement consisting of those same two elements, but in reverse order. For example, Job says in 3:5:

May it not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of the months may it not come.

You may wish to show this form in your translation by following the Hebrew word order, even if that would not ordinarily be the order you would follow in your language. For 3:5, English might ordinarily say:

May it not come into the number of the months; may it not rejoice among the days of the year.

But the ULT follows the Hebrew word order in order to give an idea of this characteristic form of Hebrew poetry.

“answered and said”

The author uses the phrase “answered and said” many times in the book of Job. This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with “and”. The word “answered” tells for what purpose a person “said” something. Specifically, they said it in order to answer or respond to what someone else said. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and,” such as “responded.” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

“fear”

In several places in the book, the author uses a word from the root “fear,” such as the verb “fear” or the adjective “fearful,” in a specific sense. He uses the word to describe an awe of God that leads to holy living. He is not referring to an emotion and saying that the person is afraid of God. He means that the person respects and obeys God. Notes will call attention to this usage where it occurs, and they will suggest translations such as the verb “respect” and the adjective “respectful.” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

“behold”

In many places in the book, characters use the term “behold” to focus their listeners’ attention on what they are about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation in these instances.

“nose”

In several places in the book, various characters use the term “nose” to mean anger. They do this by association with the way that a person who is angry breathes heavily through his nose. Your language and culture may also associate anger with a particular part of the body. If so, you could use an expression involving that part of the body in your translation. You could also use plain language and say “anger.”

Job 1

Job 1 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter introduces a story about a man named Job who lived during a time long before the author.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Wealth

In the time and place in which the book of Job is set, a person's wealth was measured by the number of animals he owned. The book describes how Job owned thousands of animals in order to indicate that he was very rich. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Sacrifices

Job was a man who obeyed Yahweh carefully. We might therefore wonder why he offered sacrifices on behalf of his children, as 1:5 describes, since he was not one of the descendants of Aaron, who were the only ones whom the law of Moses allowed to offer sacrifices. It must be remembered that Job lived prior to the time when God gave Moses the law, so his religious practices were different from those of the Hebrew people after Moses. In Job's culture, it was normal and acceptable for the father to act as a priest for his family and to offer sacrifices on their behalf. The events that this book relates took place about the same time as the life of Abraham. Therefore, this book corresponds more with Genesis 12–50 than with the rest of the Old Testament. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/godly\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/lawofmoses\]\]](#))

Translation Issues in This Chapter

“the adversary”

The Hebrew word *satan* means “adversary.” The Old Testament uses the word in that sense in several places, for example, 1 Kings 11:14, “Yahweh raised up an adversary against Solomon, Hadad the Edomite.” In chapters 1 and 2 of the book of Job, there is a character called “the satan” or “the adversary.” This seems to be a created angelic being who opposes righteous people and accuses them before God of having wrong motives. Many interpreters of the book of Job identify this character with Satan, the devil. The UST follows that interpretation, but the ULT translates the term more basically as “adversary.” You can decide how to translate this term in your own translation.

Job 1:1

There was a man in the land of Uz

The author is introducing **Job** as the main participant in the story. If your language has its own way of introducing participants, you can use it here in your translation. Alternate translation: "There once was a man who lived in the land of Uz" (See: **Introduction of New and Old Participants (p.1218)**)

Uz. Job

The word **Uz** is the name of a place, and the word **Job** is the name of a man. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

blameless and righteous

The terms **blameless** and **righteous** mean similar things. The author is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "very righteous" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

both fearful of God

As the General Introduction to Job discusses, here as in several other places in the book, the author is using a word from the root "fear;" in this case the word **fearful**, in a particular sense. He is describing an awe of God that leads to holy living. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "both respectful of God" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and turning from evil

The author is speaking figuratively of Job as if he physically **turned** away from evil. He means that he did not live in an evil way but instead lived in the right way. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and careful not to do anything wrong" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 1:2

Seven sons and three daughters were born to him

Here and through verse 5, the author is introducing background information about **Job** that will help readers understand what happens later in the story. In your translation, introduce this information in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture. (See: **Background Information (p.1147)**)

Seven sons and three daughters were born to him

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Job had seven sons and three daughters" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 1:3

the sons of the East

The expression **sons of** describes people who share a certain quality. In this case, the author is using the expression to describe people who have the quality of living in **the East**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent idiom from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the people who lived in the East” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the sons of the East

The author is referring to an area to the **East** of where he and his audience live. It seems probable that he may mean the area east of the Jordan River, as the UST suggests. However, since it is not known exactly where the author and his audience lived, you could also use a general expression rather than try to identify the area in your translation. Alternate translation: “the people who lived in that area” (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p. 1305)**)

Job 1:4

And his sons went and made a feast, a man in {his} house on his day

The author is using the expression **went and** to describe customary action. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "His sons had the custom of taking turns hosting feasts in their homes" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

on his day

This could mean implicitly: (1) Alternate translation: "on an assigned day of the week" (2) Alternate translation: "on his birthday" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and they sent and called

The terms **sent** and **called** mean similar things. The author is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "and they invited" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 1:5

when the days of the feast had gone around

The author is speaking as if the **days of the feast** had literally **gone around** or traveled a certain distance and then returned to their starting point. He means that each son had taken his turn hosting a feast. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “after the days of the feast had made a full circuit” or “after each son had taken his turn hosting a feast” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

my sons

Although the term **sons** is masculine, Job is likely using the word in a generic sense to refer to all of his sons and daughters. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women, as the UST does, or you could mention both sons and daughters. Alternate translation: “my sons and daughters” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

and blessed

It is possible that the original reading here was “cursed” and that scribes changed it to **blessed** in order to avoid the uncomfortable language of a person cursing God. Traditional manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible do not have a marginal notation about this as they do in the case of [7:20](#), but many translations read “cursed” since this is the kind of change that scribes are known to have made in similar cases. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT. Alternate translation: “and cursed” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

have sinned and blessed

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **sinned** tells in what way one of Job’s children might have **blessed**, that is, “cursed” God. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “have sinfully cursed” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

in their hearts

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts. Alternate translation: “in their thoughts” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

all the days

The author says **all** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “on a regular basis” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 1:6

And it was the day, and the sons of God came

The author is using the phrase **And it was the day** to introduce a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: “One day the sons of God came” (See: **Introduction of a New Event (p.1215)**)

the sons of God

This expression describes spiritual beings whom God created. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the angelic beings” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

to present themselves to Yahweh

The context suggests that these angelic beings came to Yahweh at regular times to report on their activities. You can provide this information in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “to give Yahweh a regular report on their activities” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the adversary

See the discussion in the General Notes to this chapter for how to translate the title **the adversary** here and in the rest of this chapter and in chapter 2. Alternate translation, as in UST: “Satan” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

Job 1:7

And the adversary answered Yahweh and said

As the General Introduction to Job discusses, this phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **answered** tells for what purpose the adversary **said** this. If it would be more natural in your language, here and in the rest of the book you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “The adversary responded to Yahweh” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

From wandering on the earth and from going back and forth on it

These two phrases mean similar things. The adversary is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and convey the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “From wandering all over the earth” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

Job 1:8

Have you set your heart upon

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts and perceptions. Alternate translation: "Have you considered" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

there is} not like him

This expression leaves out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "there is not anyone like him" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

blameless and righteous

See how you translated this expression in [1:1](#). (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

fearful of God

See how you translated this expression in [1:1](#). (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and turning from evil

See how you translated this expression in [1:1](#). (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 1:9

Does Job fear God for nothing

The adversary is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Job gets a lot in return for fearing God!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

God

The adversary is speaking about God in the third person, even though he is addressing him directly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "you" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Job 1:10

Have you not put a hedge around him and around his house and around all that {is} his, from every side

The adversary is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You have put a hedge around him and around his house and around all that is his, from every side!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Have you not put a hedge around him and around his house and around all that {is} his, from every side

The adversary is speaking as if God had literally **put a hedge** around Job and his possessions. He means that God has protected Job and all that he owns. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Have you not protected him and his house and all that is his, from every side?" or "You have protected him and his house and all that is his, from every side!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

You have blessed the works of his hands, and his cattle have burst forth in the land

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: "His cattle have burst forth in the land because you have blessed the works of his hands" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

the works of his hands

The adversary is using one part of Job, **his hands**, to mean all of Job in the act of doing **works**, specifically the activity of raising cattle. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "everything he has done" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and his cattle have burst forth in the land

The adversary is speaking as if Job's **cattle** have literally **burst forth** and covered **the land** as if they were floodwaters. He means that Job's cattle have increased greatly in number. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and his herds of cattle have become very large" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 1:11

just stretch out your hand and touch all that {is} his, if he will not bless you to your face

The terms **stretch out** and **touch** are imperatives, but they communicate an assertion rather than commands. Use a form in your language that communicates an assertion. Alternate translation: “if you stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, he will bless you to your face” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.1210)**)

stretch out your hand

Here, **hand** represents the capability of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “use your power” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and touch

In this context, the word **touch** means “destroy.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and destroy” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

if

The adversary is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and see if” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

he will & bless you

See how you translated the word “blessed” in verse 5. Scribes may have made a similar change here from “curse” to **bless**. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT. Alternate translation: “he will ... curse you” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

to your face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. The claim is that Job would not curse God in his “heart” (that is, in his thoughts) as Job was afraid one of his children might have done. Rather, Job would curse God out loud, and since God is present everywhere, Job would be cursing him in person. Alternate translation: “in person” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 1:12

Behold

As the General Introduction to Job discusses, Yahweh is using the term **Behold** to focus the adversary's attention on what he is about to say. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

is} in your hand

Here, **hand** represents the capability of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "is in your power" or "is under your control" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

do & stretch out your hand

See how you translated the similar expression in the previous verse. (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the face of Yahweh

As in the previous verse, here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "the presence of Yahweh" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 1:13

And it was the day, and his sons and his daughters

The author is using the phrase **And it was the day** to introduce a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. Alternate translation: "One day Job's sons and daughters" (See: **Introduction of a New Event (p.1215)**)

Job 1:14

The oxen were plowing and the donkeys {were} feeding at their hand

The messenger is giving background information to help Job understand what he reports next. In your translation, introduce this information in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture. (See: **Background Information (p.1147)**)

at their hand

This expression uses the word **hand** to mean the side of a person, animal, or group of animals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “at their side” or “next to them” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 1:15

Sheba

The messenger is using the name of an entire people group, **Sheba**, to mean some members of that group. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “some of the Sabbeans” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Sheba

The word **Sheba** is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

And & fell {on them

The messenger is using the word **fell** in a specific sense to mean “attacked.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this meaning plainly, as the UST does. (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and they struck the servants with the edge of the sword

The messenger is reporting that the Sabbeans killed the servants. He is describing this by association with the means that the Sabbeans used to kill them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and they killed the servants” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and only I alone have escaped to tell you

You may find it more appropriate to represent this in your translation as an exclamation rather than as a statement, here and in verses 16, 17, and 19. (See: **Exclamations (p.1179)**)

and only I alone have escaped

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it, here and in verses 16, 17, and 19. Alternate translation, as in UST: “I am the only one who has escaped” (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

Job 1:16

and burned up the sheep and the servants and consumed them

The terms **burned up** and **consumed** mean similar things. The second messenger is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase.

Alternate translation: "completely burned up the sheep and the servants" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 1:17

The Chaldeans

The word **Chaldeans** is the name of a people group. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

and they struck the servants with the edge of the sword

See how you translated this same expression in [1:15](#). Alternate translation: “they killed the servants” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 1:18

Your sons and your daughters {were} eating and drinking wine in the house of their eldest brother

The messenger is giving background information to help Job understand what he reports next. In your translation, introduce this information in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture. (See: **Background Information (p.1147)**)

Job 1:19

the four corners of the house

Alternate translation: “the structural supports of the house” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 1:20

And Job arose and tore

Here the word **arose** may indicate that Job took action to respond to what the messengers told him, not that he stood up from a seated position. Alternate translation: "In response, Job tore" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and tore his robe and shaved his head

Job **tore his robe and shaved his head** to show how deeply distressed he was. If this would not be clear to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "and tore his robe and shaved his head to show how deeply distressed he was" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

and fell to the ground and prostrated himself

Be sure that it is clear in your translation that Job did not fall down accidentally. Make clear that he did these things in order to assume a posture of worship. Alternate translation: "and got down on the ground and lay flat as a gesture of worship to God" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 1:21

Naked & and naked

Job is using one kind of possession, clothing, to mean all kinds of possessions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Without any possessions ... without any possessions" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

I came from the womb of my mother

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: "I was born" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

I will return there

Job is speaking as if the grave in which he will be buried is another **womb** like that of his **mother**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will go to the grave" or "I will be buried" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

May the name of Yahweh be blessed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "May people bless the name of Yahweh" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

May the name of Yahweh be blessed

Here, **name** represents the reputation of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could say that plainly. Alternate translation: "May Yahweh continue to have a good reputation" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 1:22

Job did not sin and he did not ascribe impropriety to God

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **sin** tells what kind of action it would be if Job were to **ascribe impropriety to God**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “Job did not sin by ascribing impropriety to God” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 2

Job 2 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

The events of this chapter are very similar to those of the previous chapter. However, this time Job is tested in an even more severe way. After losing his wealth and family, Job also loses his health, and his wife begins to encourage him to sin by cursing Yahweh. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/sin\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/curse\]\]](#))

Translation Issues in This Chapter

“the adversary”

This character appears in chapter 2 as well as in chapter 1. Translate the name the same way here as you decided to translate it in the previous chapter.

Job 2:1

And it was the day, and the sons of God came

The author is using the phrase **And it was the day** to introduce a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. See how you translated the same expression in [1:6](#). Alternate translation: “One day the sons of God came” (See: **Introduction of a New Event (p. 1215)**)

the sons of God

This expression describes spiritual beings whom God created. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated this in [1:6](#). Alternate translation: “the angelic beings” (See: **Idiom (p. 1207)**)

Job 2:2

From wandering on the earth and from going back and forth on it

These two phrases mean similar things. The adversary is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them and convey the emphasis in another way. See how you translated the same expression in [1:7](#). Alternate translation: "From wandering all over the earth" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

Job 2:3

Have you set your heart on

See how you translated this expression in 1:8. Alternate translation: “Have you considered” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

there is not like him

See how you translated this expression in 1:8. Alternate translation: “there is not anyone like him” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

blameless and righteous

See how you translated this expression in 1:1. (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

fearful of God

See how you translated this expression in 1:1. (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and turning from evil

See how you translated this expression in 1:1. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

is holding firmly to his integrity

Yahweh is speaking as if Job were literally **holding firmly** onto his **integrity**. He means that Job is maintaining his integrity. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “is maintaining his integrity” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

is holding firmly to his integrity

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **integrity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “is continuing to live in the right way” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

to devour him

Yahweh is speaking as if the adversary had literally incited him to **devour** or eat up Job. He means that the adversary had incited him to allow the adversary to destroy Job’s possessions and family. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to allow you to destroy his possessions and family” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 2:4

Skin for skin

In this expression, the adversary is using part of a person or animal, the **skin**, to mean all of that person or animal. The basic meaning is that a person will sacrifice even a valuable herd animal in order to save himself, and the more general meaning, as the adversary explains in the rest of the verse, is that a person will sacrifice just about anything he owns in order to stay alive. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "An animal in exchange for a person's life" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 2:5

just stretch out your hand and touch upon his bones and upon his flesh, if he will not bless you to your face

The terms **stretch out** and **touch** are imperatives, but they communicate an assertion rather than commands. Use a form in your language that communicates an assertion. See how you translated the same expression in [1:11](#). Alternate translation: “if you stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, he will bless you to your face” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.1210)**)

just stretch out your hand

Here, **hand** represents the capability of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the same expression in [1:11](#). Alternate translation: “just use your power” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and touch

In this context, the word **touch** means “harm.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and harm” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

upon his bones and upon his flesh

The adversary is using two parts of Job's body, his **bones** and his **flesh**, to mean Job's whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “his body” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

if

The adversary is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. See how you translated the same expression in [1:11](#). Alternate translation: “and see if” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

he will & bless you

See how you translated the same expression in [1:11](#). Scribes may also have made a change here from “curse” to **bless**. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT. Alternate translation: “he will ... curse you” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

to your face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. See how you translated the same expression in [1:11](#). Alternate translation: “in person” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 2:6

in your hand

Here, **hand** represents the capability of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar expression in [1:12](#). Alternate translation: "in your power" or "under your control" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 2:7

the face of Yahweh

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. See how you translated the similar expression in [1:12](#). Alternate translation: “the presence of Yahweh” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and he struck Job with bad boils

The author is speaking as if the adversary literally **struck** Job with these **boils**, as if they were a weapon in his hand. He means that the adversary caused Job to suffer from the boils. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he afflicted Job with bad boils” or “he caused Job to suffer from bad boils” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

with bad boils

The word **boils** describes large, itching, painful skin infections. If your readers would not be familiar with what boils are, in your translation you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “with large, itching, painful skin infections” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

from the sole of his foot to his pate

The author is using the extreme ends of Job’s body, **the sole of his foot** and **his pate** (that is, the top of his head), to mean those parts and everything in between. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “over his entire body” (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

Job 2:8

a shard

A **shard** was a piece of broken pottery. It had sharp edges, so Job could **scrape himself** with it. If your readers would not be familiar with what a shard is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “a sharp fragment of pottery” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

to scrape himself

The implication is that Job would **scrape himself** with the shard to clean his skin and to reduce the itching of the boils. You can provide this information in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “to scrape himself to clean his skin and to reduce the itching of the boils” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and he was sitting in the midst of the ash pile

In this culture, there was place outside the city where rubbish was brought and burned to dispose of it. This left a pile of ashes. Job was sitting in that pile as a symbolic action to show how distressed he was. It was a way of signifying that he no longer felt his life was worth anything. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of his action. Alternate translation: “he was sitting in the midst of the ash pile outside the city to show how distressed he was” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 2:9

Are} you still holding firmly to your integrity

Job's wife is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should not still be holding firmly to your integrity!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Bless God and die

You may find it more appropriate to represent this in your translation as an exclamation rather than as a statement. Alternate translation: "Bless God and die!" (See: **Exclamations (p.1179)**)

Bless

See how you translated the word "bless" in 1:11 and 2:5. Scribes may also have made a change here from "Curse" to **Bless**. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT. Alternate translation: "Curse" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

Bless God and die

Job's wife seems to be saying implicitly that Job no longer has any reason either to trust God or to live, and that if he curses God, God will kill him too and put him out of his misery. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly. Alternate translation: "Curse God so that he will kill you too and put you out of your misery" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 2:10

the foolish one

This phrase does not refer to a specific person. It refers to anyone who has the quality that it names. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “a foolish person” or, since the expression is feminine, “a foolish woman” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the foolish one

In this context, the word **foolish** does not describe a person who is stupid or lacking intelligence or education. It means someone who does not respect God and who therefore does not live in the way that God has instructed people to live. Alternate translation: “a person who does not respect and obey God” or “a woman who does not respect and obey God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Indeed, will we receive the good from God and not receive the bad

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “if we are willing to receive the good from God, we should also be willing to receive the bad” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the good & and & the bad

Job is using the adjectives **good** and **bad** as a nouns to mean certain kinds of things. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “good things ... and ... bad things” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

with his lips

The author is referring to what Job said by association with **lips** that Job used in order to say it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in anything that he said” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 2:11

all this evil had come on him

The author is speaking of the **evil** or trouble that happened to Job as if it were a living that **had come on him**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “all these bad things had happened to him” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite

The words **Eliphaz**, **Bildad**, and **Zophar** are the names of men. The word **Temanite** describes someone from the town of Teman in the ancient country of Edom. The word **Shuhite** describes someone from the people group descended from Shuah, a son of Abraham and Keturah. The word **Naamathite** describes someone from the town of Naamah in Canaan. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

to sympathize with him and to comfort him

The terms **sympathize** and **comfort** mean similar things. The author is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “to sympathize earnestly with him” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 2:12

And they raised their eyes

This expression means to look carefully and intently off into the distance. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They looked intently off into the distance" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and they did not recognize him

The implication is Job's friends did not recognize him at first when they saw him at a distance. Job looked very different than usual because of his grief and because of the sores covering his body. You can provide this information in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "they barely recognized him because he looked so different due to his grief and his sores" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and they raised their voice and wept

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two phrases connected with **and**. The phrase **raised their voice** tells how the friends **wept**, that is, loudly. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use "and." Alternate translation: "and they wept in a loud voice" or "and they wept loudly" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

and they raised their voice

The author is speaking as if the friends literally **raised** their voice, that is, lifted it up into the air. He means that they made a loud sound with their voices as they wept. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they made a loud sound" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and they raised their voice

Since the author is speaking of three people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **voice**. Alternate translation: "they raised their voices" (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

and they each tore his robe, and they threw dust heavenward upon their heads

Job's friends tore their robes and threw dust into the air so that it would land on their heads as symbolic actions to show that they were deeply distressed about what had happened to Job. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "to show how distressed they were about what had happened to Job, each tore his robe, and they threw dust heavenward upon their heads" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 2:13

And they sat with him on the ground

Job's friends **sat with him on the ground** as a symbolic action to express their sincere sympathy with him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "And to express their sincere sympathy, they sat with him on the ground" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 3

Job 3 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Rhetorical questions

In many places in this chapter, Job uses the question form in order to express strong feelings. Your language might not use the question form for this purpose. Notes will suggest other ways to translate these questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Birth meaning life by association

Throughout this chapter, Job is saying that does not feel that his life is worth living any longer. He communicates this by cursing the day he was born, which is a way of saying by association that he wishes he had never lived. This is a powerful poetic device that would be good to show to your readers, so it would be preferable to translate the device itself, rather than express only its meaning or implications in your translation. In other words, for example, it would be appropriate to translate Job's actual words in 3:3, "May the day on which I was born perish," rather than have him say something like, "I do not feel that my life is worth living any more, and so I wish I had never been born." (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.1305)**)

Job 3:1

Job opened his mouth

The author is referring to Job speaking by association with the way **Job opened his mouth** in order to speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Job spoke up" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and cursed his day

In this context, the expression **his day** means the day on which Job was born. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and cursed his birthday" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and cursed his day

The implication is that Job **cursed** his birthday because he was suffering so greatly that he wished he had never been born. You can provide this information in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and cursed his birthday because he was suffering so greatly that he wished he had never been born" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 3:2

Job answered and said

See the discussion of this expression in the General Introduction to Job. In this case, Job is responding not to something that someone else said but to all that has happened to him. Alternate translation: "In response to all that had happened to him, Job said" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 3:3

May the day on which I was born perish, and the night {that} said, 'A boy has been conceived

See the discussion of Hebrew poetry in the General Introduction to Job to decide how to approach the translation of this verse and the other verses in the book that consist of a statement and then one or two further statements that advance the meaning of the first one in some way. Alternate translation: "May the day on which I was born perish, yes, may the night perish that said a boy had been conceived" or "May the night I was conceived and the day on which I was born both perish" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

May the day on which I was born perish

Job is speaking of the **day** on which he **was born** as if it were a living thing that could **perish**. It is clear from verse 6 that he means he wishes it would no longer be one of the days of the year. Your language may have an expression of its own that you could use to express this meaning in your translation. Alternate translation: "May the day on which I was born be stricken from the calendar" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and the night

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and may the night perish" or "and may the night also be stricken from the calendar" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

that} said, 'A boy has been conceived

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "that said that a boy had been conceived" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

that} said, 'A boy has been conceived

Job is speaking of the **night** of his conception as if it were a living thing that could speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "on which I was conceived as a boy" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

A boy has been conceived

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "A woman has conceived a boy" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 3:4

May God not seek it from above, and may light not shine upon it

Job is speaking as if God would literally **seek** the day of his birth after it became dark. In this context, the word **seek** could mean: (1) to show concern. Alternate translation: “May God not show concern from above for that day by restoring its light” (2) to look for. Alternate translation: “May God not search for that day from above when he discovers that it is missing and bring it back among the other days by restoring its light” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

May God not seek it from above, and may light not shine upon it

Since it was God who created day by making light ([Genesis 1:3](#)), Job seems to be wishing that his birthday would be dark because God would not provide any light for it. Alternate translation: “May God not care for it from above, and as a result, may light not shine upon it” or “May no light shine upon it, because God is not caring for it from above” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

Job 3:5

May darkness and a dark shadow claim it

The terms **darkness** and **dark shadow** mean similar things. The author is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "May darkness completely claim it" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

May darkness and a dark shadow claim it

Job assumes that his listeners will understand that by **claim** he is referring to the way, in his culture, a close relative would bring an orphaned child into his own home and make that child a member of his own family. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "May darkness and deep darkness make it part of their own family" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

May darkness and a dark shadow claim it

Job is speaking as if **darkness** and a **dark shadow** were living things that could adopt the day of his birth, as if it too were a living thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "May that day be just like darkness, yes, like deep darkness" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

may a cloud dwell over it

Job is speaking of a **cloud** as if it were a living thing that could **dwell** or make its home **over** the day of his birth, and he is speaking of that day as if it were something that itself lived in a particular place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "may that whole day be cloudy" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the blacknesses of the day

In this possessive form, **the day** is the object rather than the subject of **blacknesses**. That is, this does not mean blacknesses that the day possesses, it means all the things that blacken a day, that is, make it dark. This would include things such as eclipses, sand storms, volcanic eruptions, etc. Alternate translation: "all the things that blacken a day" or "all the things that make a day dark" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

the blacknesses of the day

If your language would not use an abstract noun such as **blacknesses**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "all the things that blacken a day" or "all the things that make a day dark" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

may & terrify it

Job is speaking of the day of his birth as if it were a living thing that blackening events could **terrify**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "make it so dark that it is no longer truly a day" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 3:6

may gloom take it

Job is speaking of **gloom** as if it were a living thing that could **take** away the night of his conception, as if it were an object that could be carried. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “may it be without any light” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

May it not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of the months may it not come

The pronoun **it** refers to the day when Job was born. Job is alternating between speaking about that day and about the night when he was conceived. Alternate translation: “May the day when I was born not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of the months may it not come” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

May it not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of the months may it not come

Job is speaking of the day of his birth as if it were a living thing that could **rejoice** that it was one of the days of the year and that could **come** among the months of the year. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “May it not be one of the days of the year, yes, may it not be a day in any of the months” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

May it not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of the months may it not come

Job is not saying that he does not want the day of his birth to be one of the months of the year. Rather, he is using the possessive form **the number of the months** to mean the group of all of the months. In other words, that is another way of saying “the year.” Alternate translation: “May it not be one of the days of the year; indeed, may it not be part of the year at all” or, combining the two phrases, “May that day be left out of the year completely” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

May it not rejoice among the days of the year; into the number of the months may it not come

It may be more natural in your language to mention the shorter period, **months**, before the longer period, **the year**, in order to increase the emphasis as the sentence progresses. The UST models one way to do this. (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

Job 3:7

That night—may it be barren

Job is speaking of the **night** he was conceived as if it were a living thing that could be **barren**. He means that he does not want that night to have any children, in the sense that he does not want any more children to be conceived on that night or, as the context suggests, born on that night. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “May no one ever again be born on that night” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

May a joyful shout not come into it

Job is speaking of a **joyful shout** as if it were a living thing that could **come into** a place. He is referring to people shouting for joy on the night of the day when he was born. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “May no one shout joyfully on that night” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

May a joyful shout not come into it

Job means implicitly that he does not want anyone to shout joyfully on this particular night to celebrate the birth of a child. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “May no one shout joyfully on that night to celebrate the birth of a child” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 3:8

May & curse it

The pronoun **it** refers to the day when Job was born. Job is alternating between speaking about that day and about the night when he was conceived. Alternate translation: “May ... curse that day” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the ones cursing a day

Job assumes that his listeners will understand that by **the ones cursing a day** he is referring to sorcerers. People in this culture employed sorcerers in the belief that they could cause bad things to happen on a particular day to their enemies. For example, people might employ a sorcerer to try to ruin the day on which a person began an important journey or celebrated an important family occasion such as a wedding. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “professional sorcerers” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the ones skillful

Job is using the adjective **skillful** as a noun to mean certain people. The word is plural, and the ULT adds the word **ones** to show that. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “the people who have the skill” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

to awaken Leviathan

The implication is that if sorcerers created chaos by awakening the chaos monster, there would no longer be any distinction between days, and so the day of Job's birth would no longer have a distinct identity. You could say that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “to cause chaos among days” or “to destroy the distinct identity of the day on which I was born” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Leviathan

As the General Introduction to Job explains, ancient peoples seem to have been aware of a large, fierce creature that lived in the ocean, which they called the “sea monster.” People in Job's culture regarded the sea as the realm of watery chaos, and they associated this sea monster with that chaos. That is the association that Job is making here, calling the sea monster by the name Leviathan. You could retain the name Leviathan in your translation. Alternatively, you could use a general expression to convey the idea here. Alternate translation: “the sea monster that is associated with chaos” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 3:9

may it wait for light but {there be} none, and may it not see the eyelids of the dawn

Job is speaking of the day of his birth as if it were a living thing that could **wait** for **light** to appear in the sky and **see** the **dawn**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “may light never appear on that day, yes, may dawn never break on that day” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the eyelids of the dawn

Job is referring to light flashing from eyes by association with the **eyelids** that open to reveal that flashing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the light flashing from the eyes of the dawn” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the eyelids of the dawn

Job is speaking of **the dawn** as if it were a living thing that had **eyelids** that could open to reveal light flashing from its eyes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. By **dawn**, Job means the sunrise itself, not the first faint light that appears on the horizon to indicate that a new day is beginning. Alternate translation: “the first flashes of light from the sunrise” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 3:10

it did not close the doors of my womb

Job is using the possessive form **my womb** to mean the womb from which he was born, that is, his mother's womb. He is not saying that he himself had a womb. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "it did not close the doors of my mother's womb" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

it did not close the doors of my womb

Job is speaking as his mother's **womb** literally had **doors** that could have **closed** to keep him from being born. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it did not keep me from being born" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it did not close the doors of my womb and hide

Job is speaking as if the day of his birth were a living thing that could have kept him from being born. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "nothing kept me from being born on that day and hid" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and hide trouble from my eyes

Job is also speaking as if the day of his birth were a living thing that could have hidden **trouble** from his **eyes**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and nothing hid trouble from my eyes" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and hide trouble from my eyes

Job is referring to his ability to see by association with the **eyes** by which he sees. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and hide trouble from my sight" or "and keep me from seeing trouble" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and hide trouble from my eyes

In this context, to see **trouble** means to experience it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and keep me from experiencing trouble" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and hide trouble from my eyes

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trouble**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and keep me from suffering so badly" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 3:11

Why did I not die from the womb, come out of the belly and expire

These two phrases mean similar things. As Job and the other characters do throughout the poetic sections of the book, here he is using repeating phrases in order to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. (See the discussion of “parallelism” in the General Introduction to the book of Job.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine these phrases. However, you may wish to retain both of them in order to give your readers an idea of how Hebrew poetry worked. The following notes give suggestions for how to do that. Alternate translation, combining the phrases: “Why did I not die just as soon as I was born?” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

Why did I not die from the womb, come out of the belly and expire

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate using the statement or exclamation form. It may be helpful to make this two sentences. Alternate translation: “I wish I had died from the womb! I wish I had come out of the belly and expired!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

from the womb

Job is referring to his birth by association with the **womb** from which he was born. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “as soon as I was born” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and expire

Job is using the word **expire**, which means to “breathe out,” to mean “die.” This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “and pass away” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

come out of the belly and expire

Job is referring to his birth by association with the **belly** (a poetic synonym for “womb”) from which he was born. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “breathe my last as soon as my mother gave birth to me” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 3:12

Why did knees welcome me, and why breasts, that I should suck

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I wish that knees had not welcomed me, and breasts, that I should have sucked!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why did knees welcome me, and why breasts, that I should suck

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Why did knees welcome me, and why did breasts welcome me so that I could suck?" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Why did knees welcome me, and why breasts, that I should suck

Job is using parts of his mother to mean all of his mother in the act of nursing him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Why did my mother hold me on her knees and nurse me?" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 3:13

For

The word **For** indicates that the sentence it introduces states what the result would have been if the event Job has been describing had actually taken place, that is, if he had died at birth. Alternate translation: "If that had been the case," (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1204)**)

now

Alternate translation: "by now" or "at this time"

I had lain down and was reposing, I had slept, then it was being rest to me

Job is using the past tense to describe what would have been the case if he had actually never been born. Your language may use the past tense in this same way. If not, you could use the conditional tense here. Alternate translation: "I would have lain down and been reposing, I would have slept and it would have been rest to me" (See: **Irregular Use of Tenses (p.1224)**)

I had slept

Job is using the word **slept** to mean "died." This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. If not, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I would have passed away" or "I would have died" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

it was being rest to me

If your language would not use an impersonal construction such as this one, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: "I would have been at rest" or "I would have been resting"

Job 3:14

the ones having built monuments for themselves

The word translated **monuments** refers to a desolate or ruined place. In this context, it could mean implicitly: (1) elaborate buildings in desolate places, such as the pyramids that the pharaohs built in the Egyptian desert. Since Job is wishing that this were his situation, this positive sense is probably preferable. Alternate translation: “who built great tombs for themselves in remote places” (2) ruined buildings. Alternate translation: “who rebuilt ruined buildings for themselves” or “who built buildings for themselves that are now ruined” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 3:15

the ones having filled their houses with silver

Job says that these princes **filled their houses with silver** as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “who kept much silver in their homes” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 3:16

like a hidden stillborn child

The word translated **hidden** refers implicitly to burial. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “like a child who was not born alive and so was buried immediately” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

as infants {sometimes} do not see the light

Job is using one part of the birth process, seeing **the light** for the first time, to mean all of the birth process. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “like infants who are not born alive” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 3:17

the wicked & the weary in strength

Job is using the adjectives **wicked** and **weary** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "people who are wicked ... people who are weary in strength" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 3:18

they do not hear the voice of a taskmaster

Job is referring to the orders that a **taskmaster** would give **Captives** by association with the **voice** that the taskmaster would use to convey them. He is referring to the captives' obligation to obey those orders by association with the way they would **hear** them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use equivalent expressions or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "no taskmaster gives them orders to follow" or "they no longer need to follow the orders of any taskmaster" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 3:19

Small and great {are} there

Job is using two extremes of people, **small** and **great** (meaning unimportant and important), to mean them and everyone in between. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "People of every kind are there" (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

Small and great

Job is using the adjectives **Small** and **great** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "Unimportant people and important people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and a servant

In this context, the phrase **a servant** does not refer to one specific person. It refers to servants in general. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: "and anyone who had been a servant" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 3:20

Why is light given to the miserable, and life to the bitter in soul

This is the beginning of a long question that Job asks, using the question form for emphasis, in verses 20–23. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these verses as a series of statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: “Light should not be given to the miserable! Life should not be given to the bitter in soul!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why is light given

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: “Why does God give light” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

light

Job is referring to life by association with the **light** that people who are alive are able to see. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “life” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

to the miserable, & to the bitter in soul

Job is using the adjectives **miserable** and **bitter** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “to people who are miserable ... to people who are bitter in soul” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and life

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and why is life given” or “and why does God give life” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

to the bitter in soul

This expression describes people who are **bitter** or unhappy in the depths of their beings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to people who are deeply unhappy” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 3:21

the ones longing for death, but {it is} not to them, and they dig for it more than for hidden treasure

This is a continuation of the question that Job is asking in verses 20–23, using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as the next statement or exclamation in a series. Alternate translation: “Life should not be given to people who long to die but who cannot die, who dig for death more than for hidden treasures!” or “God should not give life to people who long to die but who cannot die, who dig for death more than for hidden treasures!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

and they dig for it more than for hidden treasure

Job is speaking as if very unhappy people literally **dig** for death more eagerly than they would dig to find **hidden treasures**. He means that they want to die more than they want anything else. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “who want to die more than they want anything else” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 3:22

the ones rejoicing unto gladness, and they celebrate when they find a grave

This is a continuation of the question that Job is asking in verses 20–23, using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as the next statement or exclamation in a series. Alternate translation: “Life should not be given to people who rejoice unto gladness and celebrate when they find a grave!” or “God should not give life to people who rejoice unto gladness and celebrate when they find a grave!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the ones rejoicing unto gladness, and they celebrate

The terms **rejoicing unto gladness** and **celebrate** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “the ones who rejoice greatly” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

when they find a grave

Job is referring to death by association with the **grave** in which a person who dies is buried. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “when they die” or “when they know that they are about to die” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 3:23

to a man whose way is hidden, and God has hedged around him

This is the end of the question that Job has been asking in verses 20–23, using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as the last statement or exclamation in a series. Alternate translation: “Life should not be given to a man whose way is hidden, around whom God has hedged!” or “God should not give life to a man whose way is hidden, around whom he has hedged!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

to a man whose way is hidden, and God has hedged around him

The phrases **whose way is hidden** and **God has hedged around him** mean similar things. Job is using the two phrases together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “to a man whom God is keeping from seeing where he is going” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

whose way is hidden, and God has hedged around him

Job is speaking of how a person ought to live, or of a hopeful future that lies ahead of a person, as if that were literally a **way** or path that the person should walk along but which is **hidden** so that the person cannot find it. He speaks as if God had literally put a hedge around the person to keep him from seeing out. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “who has no hope for the future” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

whose way is hidden

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who has done the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: “whose way God has hidden” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 3:24

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he asked in the preceding verses why God would give life to a person who is as miserable as he is. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I have asked all this because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

my sighing comes before my food

The word **before** could mean implicitly: (1) that Job's sighing comes in place of his food. Alternate translation: "I am too sad to eat" (2) that Job's sighing comes first and his food comes afterwards. Alternate translation: "I cannot eat without sighing first" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

my groaning flows out like waters

The point of this comparison is that just as **waters** (those of a river, for example) flow greatly and powerfully, so Job is groaning greatly and powerfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "and I am groaning very greatly" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 3:25

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he is so upset that he cannot eat and he is groaning loudly. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I cannot eat and I am groaning because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

I feared a fear and it has arrived with me; what I dreaded has come to me

Job is speaking of what he **feared** and **dreaded** as if it were a living thing that had **arrived** or **come** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to combine these two clauses in your translation. Alternate translation: "the thing that I was most afraid of has happened" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

I feared a fear

Job is using a construction in which a verb and its object come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have its own way of expressing such a meaning. Alternate translation: "I was very afraid of something" (See: **Poetry (p.1255)**)

Job 3:26

I have not relaxed, and I have not reposed, and I have not rested, but trouble comes

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. (The word translated **but** introduces a reason.) Alternate translation: "Because trouble comes, I have not relaxed, and I have not reposed, and I have not rested" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

I have not relaxed, and I have not reposed, and I have not rested, but trouble comes

The terms **relaxed**, **reposed**, and **rested** mean similar things. Job is using the three terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "I have not been able to rest at all" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

but trouble comes

Job is speaking of **trouble** as if it were a living thing that **comes** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but trouble happens" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 4

Job 4 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

In this chapter (and the next chapter), Job's friend Eliphaz responds to what Job said in chapter 3.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Eliphaz's advice

Eliphaz advises Job to trust that God protects innocent people and punishes wicked people. He says that God corrects good people if they begin to do bad things, and he encourages Job to consider why God is correcting him. Ordinarily this would be very good advice. But Eliphaz does not understand the special circumstances that Job is in. Job himself does not understand them. God cannot explain to Job that he has allowed the adversary to test him to see whether he will still trust God even if he loses his family, possessions, and health, because if God explained this, that would make the test invalid. So this section of the book, in which Job's three friends speak with him, presents a paradox: What would ordinarily be good advice is not good advice under these special circumstances.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Rhetorical questions

Eliphaz often uses the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate his questions as statements or exclamations. Notes will offer suggestions at each place where Eliphaz uses the question form in this way. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 4:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 4:2

If a word is tried with you, will you tire? But to refrain from a word, who is able

In both of these sentences, Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: "I am concerned that you will tire if a word is tried with you. But no one is able to refrain from a word." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If a word is tried with you

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "If I try a word with you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

If a word is tried with you

Eliphaz is using the term **word** to mean what he would like to say to Job by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If I try to speak with you" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

will you tire

Eliphaz is referring to Job interrupting him and stopping him by association with the way he would do that if he were to **tire** of what Eliphaz had to say. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "will you interrupt me and stop me before I have finished what I have to say" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

But to refrain from a word, who is able

Eliphaz is likely implying that no one who saw Job suffering so badly could refrain from speaking to him out of compassion. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "But no one who saw you suffering so badly could refrain from speaking to you to try to encourage you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

from a word

Eliphaz is using the term translated **word**, in this case meaning a single spoken word, to mean by association all of what he would like to say to Job by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from speaking" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 4:3

many

Eliphaz is using the adjective **many** as a noun. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “many people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p. 1246)**)

you have strengthened weak hands

Eliphaz may be using one part of people, their **hands**, to mean the people themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you have strengthened people who were weak” or see next note for another possibility. (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

you have strengthened weak hands

Eliphaz may be referring to fear by association with way the people’s **hands** become **weak** when they are afraid. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you have helped frightened people take courage” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 4:4

Your words have upheld the one stumbling

Eliphaz is using the term **words** to mean what Job has said to people in the past by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "What you have said has upheld the one stumbling" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Your words have upheld the one stumbling

Eliphaz is speaking as if people who were struggling in life were literally **stumbling** and as if Job's **words** or counsel had literally **upheld** them or kept them from falling down. He means that Job gave wise advice that encouraged people in their struggles and helped them not to give up. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "By your advice, you have encouraged struggling people not to give up" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the one stumbling

This phrase does not refer to a specific person. It refers to anyone in the situation that it describes. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: "people who were stumbling" or "people who were struggling" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and buckling knees you have strengthened

Eliphaz is referring to exhaustion or despondency by association with way the people's **knees** may be **buckling** under those circumstances. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you have helped exhausted people to persevere" or "you have helped despondent people not to give up" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 4:5

it comes to you & it touches you

Eliphaz is speaking of trouble as if it were a living thing that could **touch** Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it happens to you ... it affects you" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

it comes & it touches

The pronoun **it** refers to trouble in both instances. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "trouble comes ... trouble touches" or "trouble happens ... trouble affects" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 4:6

Is} not your fear your confidence, your hope, even the integrity of your ways

In both of these instances, Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: "Your fear should be your confidence! The integrity of your ways should be your hope!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

your fear

In this context, the word **fear** means respect for God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "your respect for God" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

your hope

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "Is not your hope" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

of your ways

Eliphaz is speaking of Job's practices in life as if they were **ways** or paths that he was walking on. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "your conduct" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 4:7

Who, he {being} innocent, has perished? And when were the righteous destroyed

In both of these instances, Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: "We cannot name one innocent person who has perished! And the righteous are never destroyed!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

And when were the righteous destroyed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "And when has anyone destroyed the righteous" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the righteous

Eliphaz is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "righteous people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 4:8

the ones plowing misery and sowing trouble reap it

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “the ones who plow misery reap it, and the ones who sow trouble reap that” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

the ones plowing misery and sowing trouble reap it

Eliphaz is speaking as if people could literally plow **iniquity**, sow **trouble**, and **reap** those things. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “those who do wicked things and cause trouble for others will experience trouble themselves” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 4:9

By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his nose they cease {to be

Eliphaz could also be using the **breath of God** to mean by association the judgment that God pronounces against the wicked by speaking with his breath. He could be using the **blast of his nose** to mean the wrath of God against wickedness by association with the way people snort with their noses when they are angry. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God pronounces his judgment against them and destroys them; in his wrath he makes an end of them" or see next note for another possibility. (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

By the breath of God they perish, and by the blast of his nose they cease {to be

Eliphaz is speaking as if troublesome people literally **perish** when God breathes on them from his mouth and snorts at them from his **nose**. By referring to the **breath of God** and the **blast of his nose**, Eliphaz may be depicting God's judgment as a great storm that sweeps wicked people away. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God's powerful judgment against them is like a great storm that sweeps them away" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 4:10

The roar of the lion! The voice of the fierce lion! But the teeth of the young lions are broken

Eliphaz is using exclamations to add emphasis to the point he is making. If these would not be natural in your language, you could translate them as statements. Alternate translation: "Lions may roar, indeed, fierce lions may rumble, but the teeth of the young lions are broken" (See: **Exclamations (p.1179)**)

The roar of the lion! The voice of the fierce lion! But the teeth of the young lions are broken

Eliphaz is speaking of wicked people as if they were literally **lions**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Wicked people may say threatening things and appear dangerous, but God will keep them from harming righteous people" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

But the teeth of the young lions are broken

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "But God breaks the teeth of the young lions" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 4:11

The strong lion perishes for lack of prey, and the cubs of the lioness are scattered

Eliphaz is continuing to speak of wicked people as if they were literally lions. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Yes, God will keep wicked people from exploiting righteous people, and in the end the wicked people will become poor and lose their families” (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

and the cubs of the lioness are scattered

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and the cubs of the lioness scatter” (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1136)**)

Job 4:12

Now a word was confided to me

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Now someone brought a word to me secretly" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Now & to me

Eliphaz is using the word translated **Now** to introduce background information that will help Job understand what he says next. In your translation, introduce this information in a way that would be natural in your own language and culture. (See: **Background Information (p.1147)**)

a word

Eliphaz is using the term **word** to mean a message that was communicated to him by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "a message" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and my ear received

Eliphaz is using one part of himself, his **ear**, to mean all of him in the act of hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I heard" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 4:13

from visions of the night

By **visions of the night**, Eliphaz means dreams. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “from a dream that I had” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

in the falling of deep sleep upon men

Eliphaz is speaking of **deep sleep** as if it were a living thing that could be actively **falling** on people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “as happens when people are deeply asleep” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

men

Here the masculine term **men** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 4:14

fear happened to me, and trembling

The terms **Fear** and **trembling** mean similar things. Eliphaz is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "Great fear came upon me" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

fear & it frightened

For emphasis, Eliphaz is using a construction in which a subject and its verb come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis. (See: **Poetry (p.1255)**)

and it frightened all my bones

Eliphaz is using one part of himself, his **bones**, to mean all of him in the act of becoming afraid. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I became completely afraid" or "yes, I became completely afraid" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 4:15

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 4:16

An image {was} in front of my eyes

Eliphaz is referring to seeing by association with the **eyes** by which he could see. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I saw an image" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

then I heard a voice

Eliphaz is referring to speaking by association with the **voice** by which this spirit spoke. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "then I heard the spirit say" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 4:17

Will a man be more righteous than God? If a man will be more pure than his Maker

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “The spirit asked whether a man could be more righteous than God, if a man could be more pure than his Maker.” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Will a man be more righteous than God? If a man will be more pure than his Maker

In both of these sentences, Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: “A man cannot be more righteous than God! A man cannot be more pure than his Maker!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

a man

The term that Eliphaz is using for **man** here implicitly means a “mortal.” You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “a mortal” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

If a man will be more pure than his Maker

Eliphaz is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “A man cannot be more pure than his Maker, can he?” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

a man & a man

In each instance, the masculine term **man** has generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “a person ... a person” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 4:18

he does not trust & he charges

The pronouns **he** and **his** refer back to the previous verse to God, not to “a man.” It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God does not trust ... God charges” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p. 1267)**)

in his servants, and & his angels

By **his servants**, Eliphaz implicitly means the **angels** he mentions later in the verse. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “in the angels who serve him and ... those angels” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 4:19

How much less dwellers in houses of clay

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "How much less will God be confident that dwellers in houses of clay are doing the right thing" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

dwellers in houses of clay that {have} their foundation in the dust

Eliphaz is speaking as if human beings literally lived in **houses** made of **clay** that have a **foundation** set in the **dust**. He is referring to the human body, which the Bible describes as having been formed from the dust of the earth. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "human beings" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

They crumble them

They is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "Such people can be crushed" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

before

Here the term **before** means "sooner than" and by implication "more easily than." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "more easily than" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 4:20

From morning to evening

Eliphaz is using the beginning and ending of a day, **morning** and **evening**, to mean an entire day. (He means within the space of a day, not throughout a whole day.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "Within a single day" (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

they are destroyed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "God destroys them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 4:21

Is not their tent cord pulled up away from them

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Their tent cord is certainly pulled up away from them!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Is not their tent cord pulled up away from them

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "Does not God pull up their tent cord away from them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Is not their tent cord pulled up away from them

Eliphaz is speaking as if people were literally a **tent** whose **cord** had been **pulled up** so that it was in danger of imminent collapse. He means that mortals have only a brief and uncertain life. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Do not people have only a brief and uncertain life?" or, as an exclamation, "People have only a brief and uncertain life!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

in wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wisdom**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "after having lived wisely" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 5

Job 5 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry. This chapter is a continuation of the advice of Job's friend Eliphaz.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

long sentence

Eliphaz describes God in a long sentence in verses 8–13. As the notes suggest at several places, it may be helpful to break up this long sentence into several shorter sentences.

Job 5:1

Call out now

Eliphaz is using the word translated **now** to offer polite encouragement. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "Go ahead, call out" (See: **Politeness (p.1258)**)

Call out now

Eliphaz assumes that Job will understand that by **Call out**, he is telling Job to ask someone to listen to his complaint against God. In this culture, someone who had a case against someone else would go to a public area and ask established members of the community to hear and judge the case. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Go ahead, call for someone to listen to and judge your case against God" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Call out now

Eliphaz does not really want Job to **Call out** and ask someone to hear his complaint against God, even though he is telling Job to do that. Eliphaz actually intends to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of his words. He wants Job to realize that there is no being who has the wisdom or authority to hear a human being's complaint against God. Alternate translation: "There is really no point in calling for someone to listen to and judge your case against God" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

is there one answering you? To which of the holy ones will you turn

In both of these instances, Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for this purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or exclamations. Alternate translation: "there is no one who will answer you. You cannot turn to any of the holy ones." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

of the holy ones

In this context, the phrase **the holy ones** likely refers to angelic beings rather than to people who live righteously. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "of the angelic beings" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

will you turn

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job would literally **turn** to face someone whom he wanted to hear his case against God. Eliphaz means that Job would appeal to such a person, although he is arguing that there actually is no such person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "will you appeal" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 5:2

For

Eliphaz is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he does not really think that Job should look for someone to judge his complaint against God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “You should not look for someone to judge your complaint against God, because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

indignation kills the foolish, and resentment kills the one being simple

Eliphaz is speaking of **indignation** and **resentment** as if they were a living things that could kill a person. He means that people who become indignant and resentful when God corrects them, rather than admitting their sins and repenting, put themselves in a position where God has to punish them, even by killing them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “when people foolishly become indignant or naïvely become resentful when God corrects them, God must punish or even kill them” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

indignation & resentment

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **indignation** and **resentment**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: “being indignant ... being resentful” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the foolish, and & the one being simple

These phrases does not refer to specific people. They refer to anyone who has the qualities that they name. Express their meaning in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “everyone who is foolish ... and ... everyone who is simple” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the foolish

Job is using the adjective **foolish** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “the foolish person” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and & the one being simple

Eliphaz assumes that Job will understand that by **simple** he means a person who does not realize that the world is a complicated place and that he needs to cultivate godly wisdom in order to make good choices and avoid the consequences of bad choices. Your language may have a term with this meaning that you could use in your translation. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 5:3

I myself have seen

For emphasis, Eliphaz is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **have seen**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here. Other languages may have other ways of expressing this emphasis. The ULT does so by saying **I myself**. Alternate translation: "I have indeed seen" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the foolish

Job is using the adjective **foolish** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "a foolish person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the foolish

In this context, the word **foolish** describes someone who does not respect and obey God. See how you translated the similar expression in 2:10. Alternate translation: "a person who does not respect and obey God" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

taking root

Eliphaz is speaking as if this **foolish person** were literally **taking root**. He means that the person was becoming established or prospering. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "prospering" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

his abode

Eliphaz is referring to this foolish person's way of life by association with the **abode** where he lives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "his way of life" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 5:4

are far from safety

Eliphaz is speaking as if the **children** of a person who does not respect and obey God are literally **far from** safety. He means that they are not safe at all but in great danger. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "are in great danger" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

from safety

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **safety**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "from being safe" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and they are crushed at the gate

By **the gate**, Eliphaz implicitly means the place where legal disputes are settled. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and they are crushed in legal proceedings" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and they are crushed at the gate

Eliphaz is speaking as if the children of a person who does not respect and obey God are literally **crushed** in legal disputes. He means that the disputes are settled decisively in favor of their opponents. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and their opponents in legal proceedings defeat them decisively" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and {there is} none rescuing

Eliphaz implicitly means that there is no one **rescuing** these children from legal defeats and their consequences. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "because no one defends them" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 5:5

whose harvest the hungry one devours

The pronoun **whose** refers to the “foolish person” whom Eliphaz describes in verses 2 and 3. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “Hungry people devour the harvest of the foolish person” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

whose harvest the hungry one devours

Eliphaz assumes that Job will understand that by **devours the harvest** he is referring to the practice of gleaning, which the law of Moses commanded the Israelites to allow. Poor people could come into harvested fields and pick up the leftover grain to feed themselves. Eliphaz means that the foolish person and his family will not be able to harvest the grain they have planted and so gleaners will come and take all the grain. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation, as a new sentence: “The foolish person has to abandon the grain that he plants in his fields, and gleaners come and take all of it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

whose harvest the hungry one devours

While hungry people eventually will **devour** or eat up all of the grain from the foolish person’s harvest, Eliphaz means in this context that they will take all of the grain from the fields. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as a new sentence: “Hungry people will come and glean his entire harvest” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the hungry one & the thirsty ones

Eliphaz is using the adjectives **hungry** and **thirsty** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. The ULT adds the words **one** and **ones** to show that. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “the hungry person ... thirsty people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the hungry one & the thirsty ones

Eliphaz is describing poor people by association with the way that they may be **hungry** and **thirsty** because they cannot afford to buy food and drink. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use equivalent expressions or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, using a poetic parallel: “the poor one ... the impoverished ones” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the hungry one devours

This phrase does not refer to a specific person. It refers to anyone who has the quality that it names. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. It may be helpful to make this term plural, like **the thirsty ones**, for consistency. Alternate translation: “hungry people devour” or “poor people devour” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

they even take it from among the thorns

The implications are that if gleaners even collect the grain that is growing **among the thorns** in the foolish person’s field, then they will take all of the grain in the entire field. The further implication is that nothing will be

left for the foolish person and his family. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “they take every last bit of grain, leaving nothing for him and his family” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the thirsty ones pant for their wealth

Eliphaz is speaking as if **thirsty ones**, that is, impoverished people, literally **pant** for the **wealth** of foolish people, as if wealth were something they could drink to satisfy their thirst. He means that they desire the wealth. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and impoverished people desire their wealth” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and the thirsty ones pant for their wealth

Eliphaz is saying by implication that the **thirsty ones** who desire the **wealth** of foolish people actually do obtain it. They do so by gleaning their entire harvests and perhaps by other means that Eliphaz does not mention specifically. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and impoverished people take away their wealth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 5:6

For

Eliphaz is using the word **For** to connect what he has just said with his larger argument that Job should consider why God would be punishing him. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “Do not be like a person who does not respect and obey God, because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

misery does not come out from the dust, and trouble does not sprout from the ground

Eliphaz is speaking as if **misery** and **trouble** might literally come from the **dust** or the **ground**. He is comparing them to plants such as weeds that might unexpectedly appear in the soil even though a farmer did not sow their seeds. The point of the comparison is that weeds seem to come out of nowhere, while trouble and misery have an identifiable source. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, combining the two parallel lines: “trouble certainly does not just happen” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

misery does not come out from the dust, and trouble does not sprout from the ground

The implication, if trouble and misery do not just happen, is that their cause is the indignation and resentment that Eliphaz warned Job against in verse 2. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation, as a poetic parallel: “it is truly indignation that causes trouble, yes, it is resentment that causes misery” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 5:7

For

Eliphaz is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he says that trouble does not just happen. Its cause is known: People create trouble for themselves. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I say this because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

man is born to trouble, and sons of the flame soar to fly

Eliphaz assumes that Job will understand that by naming two things that he holds to be true, he means that the first is just as true as the second. You could indicate that explicitly if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "man is born to trouble, just as surely as sons of the flame soar to fly" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

man is born to trouble

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "people are born to trouble" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

man is born to trouble

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "people have an innate tendency to cause trouble for themselves" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and sons of the flame

Eliphaz is describing sparks as if they were **sons of the flame**, that is, as if fire gave birth to sparks and sent them out. Your language may have a poetic expression of its own that you could use in your translation to describe sparks. You could also state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and sparks" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

soar to fly

This expression means that sparks fly upwards, carried by currents of air. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "fly upwards" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 5:8

I myself would seek for God

For emphasis, Eliphaz is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **seek**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. The ULT does so by using the intensive pronoun **myself**. Alternate translation: "I would certainly seek for God" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

I myself would seek for God

Eliphaz is speaking as if God were literally a lost object that Job should **seek** and try to find. He means that Job should pray to God and ask God to show him how he has offended God and deserved punishment. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I myself would pray to God and ask him to show me why he was punishing me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 5:9

great {things} & marvelous {things}

Eliphaz is using the adjectives **great** and **marvelous** as nouns to mean certain kinds of things. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. For example, you could add the word **things** in both cases, as the ULT does to show the meaning. (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p. 1246)**)

and {there is} no searching

Eliphaz means implicitly that even if people search or seek to find out how God does **great things**, they cannot succeed in learning this. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “that are unsearchable” or “that no one can understand” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 1143)**)

marvelous {things}

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and who does marvelous things” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 5:10

the one giving & and sending

The pronoun **one** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "God is the one who gives ... and sends" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the face of the earth & the face of the fields

Eliphaz is speaking as if the **earth** and the **fields** each literally had a **face**. He means their surfaces. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the surface of the earth ... the surface of the fields" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 5:11

setting the humble on high, and the ones mourning are high in safety

Eliphaz is speaking as if God would literally put **lowly** people and people who are **mourning** in **high** places. He means that God will protect them and honor them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "God honors lowly people and protects people who are mourning" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the humble

Eliphaz is using the adjective **lowly** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "lowly people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

in safety

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **safety**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "where they are safe" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 5:12

the crafty

Eliphaz is using the adjective **crafty** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “crafty people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and their hands do not accomplish

Eliphaz is using the word **and** to introduce the result of God frustrating the **plans of the crafty**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “so that their hands do not accomplish” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and their hands do not accomplish

Here, **hands** figuratively represent the capability of people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and they are not able to accomplish” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 5:13

catching the cunning in their craftiness

Eliphaz is speaking as if the **craftiness** of **cunning** people were literally a trap that God uses to catch them. He means that God makes them suffer the consequences of the evil actions by which they intended to make others suffer. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “making the cunning suffer the consequences of their own evil actions” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the cunning

Eliphaz is using the adjective **cunning** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “cunning people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and the plan of the ones being deceptive is hastened

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and hastening the plan of the ones being deceptive” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and the plan of the ones being deceptive is hastened

Eliphaz is using the word **and** to introduce the result of God frustrating the **plans of the crafty**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “so that the plan of the ones being deceptive is hastened” or “so that he can hasten the plan of the ones being deceptive” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and the plan of the ones being deceptive is hastened

When Eliphaz says that God hastens the plan of deceptive people, he likely means that God makes their plans fail by bringing them too early, before they are ready, to the point where they would need to take effect. So the implication is that God makes the plan fail. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 5:14

They encounter darkness by day, and they grope at midday as at night

Eliphaz is speaking as if the cunning and deceptive people he described in the previous verse are literally in the dark during the day and cannot find their way. He means that God keeps them from realizing how to make their wicked plans succeed. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God keeps these cunning and deceptive people from realizing how to make their wicked plans succeed" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 5:15

the poor & the mighty

Eliphaz is using the adjectives **poor** and **mighty** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “poor people ... mighty people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

from the sword in their mouths

Eliphaz is speaking as if the cunning and deceptive people he described in verse 13 literally had a **sword in their mouths**. He is referring to the things these people say to try to hurt the poor. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “from the things they say to try to hurt them” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and from the hand of

Here, **hand** represents the capability of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and from the power of” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 5:16

And hope is to the poor

This expression means that the **poor** person has hope. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And the poor has hope" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

to the poor

Eliphaz is using the adjective **poor** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "to the person who is poor" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

to the poor

This phrase does not refer to a specific person. It refers to anyone who has the quality that it names. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: "to those who are poor" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and injustice shuts her mouth

Job is speaking of **injustice** as if it were a living thing that could **shut** its own **mouth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and people no longer make unjust claims against them" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and injustice

Eliphaz may be using the word translated **and** to indicate that poor people have hope because others no longer make unjust claims against them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "because injustice" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

Job 5:17

is the man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “is anyone” or “is any person” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

and the chastening of the Almighty do not despise

Eliphaz is using the word translated **and** to indicate that Job should not despise God’s chastening because he is blessed as someone whom God is correcting. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “so do not despise the chastening of the Almighty” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

do not despise

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **despise**. Alternate translation: “appreciate” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 5:18

For he injures and binds up, he wounds and his hands heal

Eliphaz is speaking as if God literally **injures** and **wounds** people and then gives them medical treatment. He means that God uses setbacks and sufferings (which could include physical ailments) to correct people. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. The UST models one way to do this. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he injures

For emphasis, Eliphaz is stating the pronoun **he**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **injures**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “truly he injures” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and his hands heal

Eliphaz is using one part of God, his **hands**, to mean all of him in the act of healing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “but he himself heals” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 5:19

In six troubles he will rescue you, and in seven, harm will not touch you

In order to make a comprehensive statement, Eliphaz is naming a number that should be sufficient to illustrate his point and then increasing that number by one for emphasis. This was a common device in Hebrew poetry. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "God will rescue you from every trouble and not allow you to be harmed" (See: **Poetry (p. 1255)**)

and in seven, harm

Eliphaz is leaving out a word that in many languages this sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply the word from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and in seven troubles harm" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

harm will not touch you

Eliphaz is speaking of **harm** as if it were a living thing that could **touch** Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you will not be harmed" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 5:20

he will redeem you from death

Eliphaz is speaking as if God would literally **redeem** or make a payment to free Job from **death** during a **famine**. He means that God will keep Job from dying from hunger. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he will keep you from dying of hunger” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and in war, from the hands of

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and in war he will redeem you from the hands of” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

from the hands of the sword

Here, the term **hands** represents capability. Eliphaz is saying that God will rescue Job from what a sword might otherwise do to him if his enemies were to use one as a weapon against him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “from being hurt by the sword” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the sword

This phrase does not refer to a specific **sword**. It refers to any sword that someone might use as a weapon against Job. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “any sword” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the sword

Eliphaz is using one kind of weapon, the **sword**, to mean all kinds of weapons. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “any weapon” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the sword

Eliphaz is referring to enemies in war by association with the weapons that those enemies would use. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “your enemies” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 5:21

From the scourge of the tongue

Eliphaz is using this possessive form to speak of the **tongue** as something that people would use like a **whip**. He is not speaking of a whip that the tongue would use. Alternate translation: "If anyone uses his tongue like a whip," (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

From the scourge of the tongue

Eliphaz is speaking as if the **tongue** were literally a **whip** that someone might use to harm Job. He means that they would say things that they intend to hurt him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "From destructive speech" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you will be hidden

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "God will hide you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

you will be hidden

Eliphaz is speaking as if God would actually hide Job from things that people say in order to hurt him. He means that God will protect Job when people say these things. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you will be protected" or "God will protect you" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

destruction when it comes

Eliphaz is speaking of **destruction** as if it were a living thing that **comes** to people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "things that happen that could destroy you" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

destruction when it comes

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **destruction**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "things that happen that could destroy you" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 5:22

You will laugh at destruction and at famine

The implication is that Job will **laugh** at ** destruction and famine** because while they might seem threatening, Job will know that God will protect him and so he will not take their threat seriously. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “You will realize gladly that God will protect you from destruction and famine” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

at destruction

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **destruction**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “at things that might destroy you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and you will not fear the beast

Eliphaz is not referring to a specific **beast**. He means any beast. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and you will not fear any beast” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 5:23

For with the stones of the field {will be} your covenant, and the beast of the field will be made peaceable to you

Since, in this verse, Eliphaz is giving the reason why he told Job in the previous verse that he would not “fear the beast of the earth,” it may be more natural in your language to put that information first. Alternate translation: “For the beast of the field will be made peaceable to you, and even with the stones of the field will be your covenant” (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

with the stones of the field {will be} your covenant

Eliphaz is speaking of **the stones of the field** were living things that could make a **covenant** with Job. He means that God will keep stones from falling or rolling onto Job's fields or emerging in the soil from underground, either making the fields less fertile or requiring extra labor to remove. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God will prevent stones from ruining your fields” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and the beast of the field will be made peaceable to you

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: “and God will cause the beast of the field to live peaceably with you” or “and God will prevent the beast of the field from harming you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and the beast of the field

Eliphaz is not referring to a specific **beast**. He means any and every beast. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and the beasts of the field” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 5:24

your tent {is in} peace

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **peace**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “your tent is safe” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

your tent

Eliphaz is referring to Job’s home (that is, his family and their possessions) by association with the **tent** in which they live. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “your home” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and you will not miss {anything}

Eliphaz means implicitly that when Job goes to inspect his **sheepfold**, he will not find that any of his sheep are missing (because, for example, wild animals killed them or someone stole them). You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and you will not find that any of the sheep are missing” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and you will not miss {anything}

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **miss**. Alternate translation: “and you will find that all of your sheep are there” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 5:25

your seed {will be} great

Here, **seed** means “descendants.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “your descendants will be many” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and your offspring, like the grass of the earth

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and that your offspring will be like the grass of the earth” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and your offspring, like the grass of the earth

The point of this comparison is that just as **the grass of the earth** is very plentiful, so Job will have a large number of offspring. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “and that your offspring will be very numerous, like the grass of the earth” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 5:26

You will come to the grave

Eliphaz is using the expression **come to the grave** to mean “die.” This is a poetic way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “You will depart this world” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

like the lifting of a stack of grain in its time

The point of this comparison is that when Job’s time comes to die, he will have lived a full and rewarding life, just as a **stack of grain** that is harvested **in its time** is ripe and fully developed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “mature and accomplished, like grain that is harvested at the peak of ripeness” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 5:27

We have examined it

By **We**, Eliphaz means himself and other wise people but not Job, to whom he is speaking, so use the exclusive form of that word in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'** (p. 1181))

and know {it

For emphasis, Eliphaz is stating the pronoun **you**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **know**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “and know it certainly” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them** (p.1267))

Job 6

Job 6 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the beginning of Job's response to Eliphaz.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different metaphors in this chapter to express his pain or despair and to show that he is upset with his friends, people who are supposed to help him during difficult times. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

In verses 16–20, Job develops the image of his friends being like a stream of water that runs dry. Since Job explains the meaning of the image again in verse 21, you do not need to explain it in your translation in verses 16–20.

Rhetorical questions

Job often uses the question form in this chapter to make emphatic statements or exclamations. This emphasis helps strengthen Job's response to Eliphaz. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

plural "you"

Beginning in verse 21, Job addresses his friends directly. So when he uses the word **you** from that verse to the end of the chapter, the word is plural. Use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

Job 6:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 6:2

If only my anguish, being weighed, were weighed, and my calamity lay in the balances together {with it

Job is speaking as if his **anguish** and **calamity** could literally be **weighed**. He means that he wishes he could prove that his calamity is so great that it justifies the anguish he is feeling and has been expressing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I wish I could prove that my calamity warrants the amount of anguish that I am feeling and showing" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

If only my anguish, being weighed, were weighed, and my calamity lay in the balances together {with it

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "If only someone would weigh my anguish thoroughly and lay my calamity in the balances" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

If only my anguish, being weighed, were weighed, and my calamity lay in the balances together {with it

The word **balances** describes an instrument for determining the weight of an object or comparing the weight of two objects. It consists of a central post with a crossbar from which two pans are hung. An object may be placed in one pan and known weights placed in the other pan until the crossbar remains level, meaning that both pans contain an equal weight. Or one object may be placed in one pan and a different object in the other pan; the pan that hangs lower contains the heavier object. If your readers would not be familiar with what **balances** are, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "If only someone would weigh both my anguish and my calamity on a scale" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

being weighed, were weighed

The words **were thoroughly weighed** translate a repeated verb. Job is repeating the verb "weigh" for emphasis. If your language can repeat words for emphasis, it would be appropriate to use that construction here in your translation. (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

Job 6:3

it would be heavier than the sand of the seas

Job is using the pronoun **it** to refer to his anguish. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “my anguish would be heavier than the sand of the seas” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p. 1267)**)

my words raved

Job is speaking of his **words** as if they were a living thing that has **raved** to his friends. He means that he himself has raved or spoken vehemently to them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I raved when I spoke to you” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 6:4

the arrows of the Almighty are in me, whose poison my spirit is drinking

Job is speaking as if God had literally shot **arrows** with **poison** into him. He means that the bad things that have happened to him, for which he considers God responsible, are making him suffer and feel desperate, as if he were dying from the poison. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am suffering desperately because of what the Almighty has done to me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the arrows of the Almighty are in me, whose poison my spirit is drinking

Job is using the possessive form to refer to an inner part of himself, the locus of his motivations and aspirations, as his **spirit**. He is not referring to a separate supernatural being, a spirit, that belongs to him. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "my morale is suffering desperately because of what the Almighty has done to me" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

is drinking

Job is speaking as if his **spirit** were literally **drinking** poison from arrows that had struck him. He means, within the context of that metaphor, that his spirit is absorbing the poison. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "is absorbing" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the terrors of God array themselves against me

Job is speaking of **the terrors of God** (that is, the things he believes God is doing to terrify him) as if they were living things that could **array themselves** against him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God is doing many things that all terrify me" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 6:5

Does a wild donkey bray over grass? If an ox bellows over its fodder

Job is using the question form for emphasis in both of these sentences. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these sentences as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "A wild donkey does not bray over grass! Indeed, an ox does not bellow over its fodder!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If an ox bellows over its fodder

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "An ox does not bellow over its fodder, does it?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Does a wild donkey bray over grass? If an ox bellows over its fodder

Job is quoting or creating a proverb, a short saying about something that is generally true in life. This proverb draws a figurative comparison: Just as animals do not complain loudly if they have food, so Job would not be protesting so vehemently if something were not seriously wrong. But since Job has already made this point explicitly in verse 3 ("therefore my words raved"), you do not need to explain it here. Rather, you can translate the proverb itself in a way that will be recognized as a proverb and be meaningful in your language and culture. If your readers would not recognize what a **wild donkey** or an **ox** is, in your translation you could use animals that your readers would recognize. (See: **Proverbs (p.1270)**)

Job 6:6

Will the unsavory be eaten without salt? If there is taste in the white of an egg

Job is using the question form for emphasis in both of these sentences. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these sentences as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "The unsavory will not be eaten without salt! And there is no taste in the white of an egg!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will the unsavory be eaten without salt? If there is taste in the white of an egg

Job is quoting or creating a proverb, a short saying about something that is generally true in life. This proverb draws a figurative comparison: Just as it is necessary to season some foods in order to eat them, so it is necessary to talk expressively about some situations in life in order to endure them. Job has already made this point explicitly in verse 3 ("therefore my words raved"), but perhaps the connection will not be as clear in this case as in the previous verse. So you could make the connection more explicitly. Alternatively, you could translate the proverb itself in a way that would be recognized as a proverb and be meaningful in your language and culture. If people in your culture would not eat **the white of an egg**, in your translation you could use a food that your readers would recognize. Alternate translation: "I cannot endure these troubles without talking emotionally about them, any more than people can eat bland food without seasoning it" (See: **Proverbs (p.1270)**)

Will the unsavory be eaten without salt

Job is using the adjective **unsavory**, which in this context means "without flavor," as a noun to mean a certain kind of food. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "Will unsavory food be eaten without salt" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Will the unsavory be eaten without salt

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Will people eat unsavory food without salt" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

If there is taste in the white of an egg

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a contrary answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "There is no taste in the white of an egg, is there" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 6:7

My soul has refused

Job is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have refused" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

to touch

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Job is moving from quoting a proverb that uses food as an illustration to talking about his actual food. Alternate translation: "to touch food" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

to touch

In this context, the word **touch** means "eat." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to eat food" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

they

The pronoun **they** refers to the troubles that Job has been experiencing. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "my troubles" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

are} like disease {in} my food

The point of this comparison is that just as **disease** can make a person feel too badly to eat, so Job's troubles are making him feel too badly to eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "are making me feel too badly to eat, as if I were sick" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

in} my food

Job is referring to eating by association with the **food** that people eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "when I eat" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 6:8

Who will grant that my request may come

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone would grant that my request would come!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Who will grant that my request may come

Job is speaking of his **request** as if it were a living thing that could **come** to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Who will grant my request" or "I wish that someone would make happen what I am requesting" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 6:9

and may God be willing and may he crush me

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two verbs connected with **and**. The verb **be willing** tells in what way Job hopes God will **crush** him. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “and may God willingly crush me” or “and may God agree to crush me” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

may he loose his hand

Here, **hand** represents the capability of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “may he use his power” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and cut me off

Job is speaking as if he were a branch that God might **cut ... off** from a tree in order to kill it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and kill me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 6:10

Yet may it still be my consolation— indeed, let me exult in pain, may he not spare— that I have not concealed the sayings of the Holy One

If it would be more natural in your language, you could put the last phrase in this sentence first, since it gives the reason for what the first and second phrases describe. Alternate translation: “I have not concealed the sayings of the Holy One, so may that still be my consolation; may it enable me to be cheerful in pain even if God does not spare me” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

Yet may it still be my consolation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **consolation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “And may this still console me” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

may he not spare

The pronoun **he** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “may God not spare” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

may he not spare

Job is not wishing that God would not spare him. He is referring implicitly to the possibility that God might not spare him. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “even if God does not spare me” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I have not concealed the sayings of the Holy One

Job is speaking as if he could literally have **concealed** the **sayings of the Holy One**. He means that he has not treated God’s decrees regarding people as if they did not exist. In other words, he has obeyed them and, to this point in the book, he has not questioned them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I have not disobeyed or questioned the sayings of the Holy One” or “I have not disobeyed or questioned God’s decrees” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

I have not concealed the sayings of the Holy One

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **concealed**. Alternate translation: “I have obeyed God’s decrees” or “I have trusted God’s decrees” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

the Holy One

Job is using the adjective **Holy** as a noun to refer to God by describing what God is like. The ULT adds the word **One** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this expression with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “God, who is holy” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 6:11

What {is} my strength, that I should wait? And what {is} my end, that I should prolong my life

Job is using the question form for emphasis in both of these sentences. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these sentences as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "I do not have enough strength to wait! And I should not try to prolong my life beyond when it will end!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

that I should wait

Job means implicitly that he does not have the strength to wait or endure until he receives the long-term blessings that Eliphaz said he would have if he committed his cause to God. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "that I should wait for those blessings" or "that I would be able to endure until I received those blessings" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 6:12

If my strength {is} the strength of stones? If my flesh {is} bronze

In both cases, Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a contrary answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "My strength is not the strength of stones, is it? My flesh is not bronze, is it?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If my strength {is} the strength of stones? If my flesh {is} bronze

Job is using the question form for emphasis in both of these sentences. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these sentences as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "My strength is not the strength of stones! My flesh is not bronze!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If my flesh {is} bronze

Job is speaking as if his **flesh** might literally be **bronze**. He is actually making a comparison. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My flesh is not as durable as bronze, is it?" or "My flesh is not as durable as bronze!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 6:13

If my help {is} not in me, and initiative has been taken away from me

Job is using the word **If** to introduce questions that anticipate negative answers. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "My help is not in me, is it, and initiative has been taken away from me, hasn't it?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If my help {is} not in me, and initiative has been taken away from me

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "My help is not in me, and initiative has been taken away from me!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

and initiative has been taken away from me

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "and my troubles have taken initiative away from me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and initiative

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **initiative**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and the capacity to act on my own behalf" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 6:14

To the despairing, covenant faithfulness from his friend

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **covenant faithfulness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "The friend of someone who is despairing should help him faithfully" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

To the despairing

Job is using the adjective **despairing** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "To someone who is despairing" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

covenant faithfulness from his friend

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "there should be covenant faithfulness from his friend" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and the fear of the Almighty he forsakes

This could mean implicitly: (1) that a friend should show faithfulness to a despairing person even if that person forsakes the fear of the Almighty (as Job's friends believe he may be doing). Alternate translation: "even if that despairing person forsakes the fear of the Almighty" (2) that if a friend does not show faithfulness to a despairing person, that friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty. Alternate translation: "otherwise that friend forsakes the fear of the Almighty" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the fear of the Almighty he forsakes

Job is using the word **fear** to mean respect for God that leads a person to obey God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that in your translation. Alternate translation: "even if he does not respect and obey the Almighty" or "otherwise he does not respect and obey the Almighty" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 6:15

My brothers

Job is using the term **brothers** figuratively to mean his three friends. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My friends" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

My brothers

Job is speaking about his friends in the third person even though they are present. If it would be more natural in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "You friends of mine" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

have dealt treacherously like a wadi

The point of this comparison is that just as a **seasonal stream** would appear to be a good source of water but then fail in the dry season, so Job's friends seemingly came to offer encouragement, but they have provided none. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "have dealt treacherously by seeming to offer encouragement but then not offering any, like a seasonal stream that seems to offer water but then fails in the dry season" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

like a channel of wadis they pass away

In this context, the expression **pass away** means to dry up. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "like a channel of seasonal streams, they dry up" or "like a channel of seasonal streams, you dry up" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

like a channel of wadis they pass away

Job is speaking as if his friends literally **pass away** or dry up the way a desert stream does. He means that in the end, they fail to provide the encouragement that they implicitly promised by coming to see him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "They have no help to offer in the end, like a channel for seasonal streams that runs dry" or "You have no help to offer in the end, like a channel for seasonal streams that runs dry" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 6:16

In this verse, Job describes the state of desert streams in the cold season, and in the next verse, he contrasts that with the state of the streams in the hot season. To show this contrast, you could create a verse bridge for verses 16–17. It might say something like this: “In the cold season, these streams are dark from ice over their channel, indeed, snow covers that channel. But in the hot season, the streams go dry and vanish, the heat dries them up completely” (See: **Verse Bridges (p.1301)**)

the ones being dark from ice over it, it hides itself with snow

The pronoun **it** refers in both cases to the “channel” of streams that Job described in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “These streams are dark from ice over their channel; that channel hides itself with snow” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

it hides itself with snow

Job is speaking as if a channel of desert streams were a living thing that **hides itself with snow** in the winter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “snow covers this channel” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 6:17

they are annihilated; & they are exterminated from their place

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "the dryness annihilates them ... the heat exterminates them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 6:18

Caravans turn themselves aside from their way

The implication is that these **Caravans** are leaving their usual routes to look for water in the dry season. The oases along the routes have presumably dried up, and the caravans are going to places where they expect to find streams still flowing. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Caravans turn themselves aside from their way to look for water" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

they go up

The expression **go up** does not necessarily indicate travel to a higher elevation. In this context, it probably means to leave the caravan route and go into the untracked desert. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "they go out" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 6:19

Caravans from Tema looked

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Caravans from Tema looked for water" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

from Tema & Sheba

The words **Tema** and **Sheba** are the names of regions. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

hoped in them

The pronoun **them** refers to the desert streams Job has been talking about. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "hoped to find streams of water" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 6:20

They were ashamed, & and they were confounded

The expressions translated **They were ashamed** and **they were confounded** may seem like passive verbal expressions, and if your language does not use such expressions, you could express these ideas in active form or in another way that would be natural in your language. Alternate translation: “They felt shame ... but the dry stream bed confounded them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

as far as it

The pronoun **it** refers to the stream bed where the caravans expected to find water. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “as far as the stream bed where they expected to find water” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 6:21

For

Job is using the word **For** to explain in what way his friends are like the desert streams he has been describing, as he said they were in verse 15. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “You are like these streams because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

you are & you see & and you fear

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the word **you** is plural here and in the rest of the chapter because Job is using it to address his three friends. Use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

you are nothing

Job is speaking of his friends as if they had become **nothing**, just as a stream ceases to exist when all of its water dries up. He means that his friends are offering him no help, just as a dried-up stream would not help a caravan that needed water in the desert. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you are not offering me any help” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you see a terror and you fear

Job seems to be saying implicitly that his friends think that God has afflicted him with a **terror** and so they are afraid to console him, because they think God will afflict them as well if they take his side. You can indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “you think that God has sent this terror and so you are afraid to help me because you think God will punish you if you do” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 6:22

Is it} that I said, 'Give me {something}'? Or, 'Make a gift to me from your wealth

Job is using the question form for emphasis in both of these sentences. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these sentences as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "I did not say to you, 'Give me something!' Or, 'Make a gift to me from your wealth!'" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Is it} that I said, 'Give me {something}'? Or, 'Make a gift to me from your wealth

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there are not quotations within a quotation. Alternate translation: "Is it that I told you to give me something? Or to make me a gift from your wealth?" or "I did not tell you to give me something or to make me a gift from your wealth" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Job 6:23

Or, 'Save me from the hand of the enemy'? Or, 'From the hand of the oppressors rescue me

Job is using the question form for emphasis in both of these sentences. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these sentences as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "I also did not say to you, 'Save me from the hand of the enemy!' Or, 'From the hand of the oppressors rescue me!'" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Or, 'Save me from the hand of the enemy'? Or, 'From the hand of the oppressors rescue me

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "Did I ask you to save me from the hand of the enemy or rescue me from the hand of the oppressors?" or "I did not ask you to save me from the hand of the enemy or rescue me from the hand of the oppressors!" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

from the hand of the enemy'? Or, 'From the hand of the oppressors

Here, **hand** represents the capability and power of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from the power of the enemy? Or, 'From the power of the oppressors'" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 6:24

and I will be silent

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **will be silent**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: "I will certainly be silent" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and how I have strayed

Job is speaking as if he could have literally **strayed** off the right path. He means that he could have done something wrong. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and what I have done wrong" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 6:25

words of uprightness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **uprightness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “upright words” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

But what does correcting from you correct

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “But correcting from you does not correct anything!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

But what does correcting from you correct

For emphasis, Job is using a construction in which a subject and its verb come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis. Alternate translation: “But what does your attempted correction really accomplish?” or “Your attempted correction really accomplishes nothing!” (See: **Poetry (p.1255)**)

Job 6:26

Do you think to correct my words, and to the wind the words of one despairing

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Do you think to correct my words, and do you liken to the wind the words of one despairing" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Do you think to correct my words, and to the wind the words of one despairing

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You think to correct my words, and you liken the words of one despairing to the wind!" or "You only want to prove me wrong; you do not believe that I am justified in saying these desperate things!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

and to the wind the words of one despairing

If Job is saying that his friends are likening his words to the wind, then Job is making a comparison. The point of the comparison is that Job's friends consider his **words** to be trivial, having no more substance than **wind**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "and do you consider the words of one despairing to be as insubstantial as the wind" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 6:27

you cast {lots} for the fatherless, and you haggle over your friend

Job assumes that his friends will understand that he is referring to two practices of his culture. If a man died who was indebted to others, his creditors could claim his children as slaves in repayment of the debt. Job is describing how such creditors might **cast lots** in order to determine which of them would get a particular child as a slave. Job is also referring to the practice of selling someone into slavery in order to obtain repayment of a debt. You can explain some of this cultural background in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “you cast lots to see which of you will have as a slave a child whose father, indebted to you, has died, and you try to get the best price for a friend whom you are selling into slavery to obtain repayment of his debt to you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

you cast {lots} for the fatherless, and you haggle over your friend

Job is speaking as if his friends would literally **cast lots** to see which of them would have an **fatherless** child as his slave and **haggle** over the price of a **friend** they were selling into slavery. Job does not mean that his friends are actually doing these things; he is making a comparison. The implication is that these are particularly callous things to do to a helpless orphan or to a friend, and Job is saying that his friends are acting just as callously towards him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. The UST models one way of doing this. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the fatherless

Job is using the adjective **fatherless** as a noun, to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this with an equivalent expression. Alternate translation: “a fatherless child” or “an orphan” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 6:28

But now, be willing, look at me, and if I would lie to your faces

Job is asking his friends to perform a symbolic action by looking directly at him so that he can look them right in the face himself. Job wants to be able to do this in order to dramatize the sincerity of what he is saying. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "But now, be willing, look at me, so that I can look right at you to show that I am speaking the truth" (See: **Symbolic Action (p. 1292)**)

and if I would lie to your faces

This could mean: (1) that Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. Specifically, he is speaking the first part of an oath and leaving the second part understood. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and if I would lie to your faces, then may God punish me severely!" (2) that Job is using the word **if** to introduce a question that anticipates a contrary answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "for I would not lie to your faces, would I?" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and if I would lie to your faces

Job is using one part of his friends, their **faces**, to mean all of them in the act of looking at him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and if I would lie to you while you were looking at me" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 6:29

turn, & yes, turn

Job is speaking as if he wants his friends literally to **turn** and go in a different direction. He means that he wants them to start treating him differently. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “start treating me differently ... yes, treat me differently” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

let injustice not be

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **injustice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “do not treat me unjustly” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

let injustice not be

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative noun **injustice**. Alternate translation: “let there be justice” or “treat me justly” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

my righteousness {is} yet in it

The pronoun **it** seems to refer to Job’s cause. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “my righteousness is yet in my cause” or “my cause is still righteous” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 6:30

Is there injustice on my tongue? If my mouth does not discern iniquity

Job is using the question form for emphasis in both of these sentences. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these sentences as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "There is no injustice on my tongue! My mouth discerns iniquity!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Is there injustice on my tongue

Job is referring to what he says by association with the **tongue**, by which he says it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Is there injustice in what I have been saying" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

If my mouth does not discern iniquity

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a contrary answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "My mouth discerns iniquity, does it not" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If my mouth does not discern iniquity

Job is speaking of his **mouth** as if it were a living thing that could **discern iniquity**. He means that he himself is able to discern whether something he might say with his mouth would be morally wrong. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I discern whether I might be speaking iniquity, do I not?" or "Certainly I can discern whether I might be speaking iniquity!" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

iniquity

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "what is iniquitous" or "what is morally wrong" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 7

Job 7 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

In this chapter, Job finishes responding to Eliphaz's first speech, and he also addresses God directly in light of his exchange with Eliphaz. - Verses 1–6: Job continues to respond to Eliphaz - Verses 7–21: Job addresses God directly

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Metaphors

Job uses many different images in this chapter to describe what the things are like that he is feeling and experiencing. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Rhetorical questions

Job often uses the question form in this chapter to emphasize the points he is making to Eliphaz and to God. Notes suggest how these questions may be translated as statements or exclamations if that would be more natural in your language. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 7:1**Is} not hardship to a man on earth? And {are not} his days like the days of a hireling**

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Man has hardship on earth! Yes, his days are like the days of a hireling!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Is} not hardship to a man on earth? & not

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hardship**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "Life on earth is hard for a man!" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

to a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "to a person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

And {are & his days like the days of a hireling

Job is using this comparison to say that just as **the days of a hireling** (that is, someone hired by the day for manual labor) are long and difficult, so his days are long and difficult. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation, as an exclamation: "Yes, his days are long and difficult, like those of a hireling!" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 7:2

As a slave longs for shade, and as a hireling awaits his wages

The point of this comparison, as Job makes clear in the next verse, is that just as a **slave** and a **hireling** have to endure long periods of wishing for relief, so Job has gone a long time without relief. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "As a slave wishes all through a long, hot day that evening would come, and as a hireling must wait until the end of the day to be paid" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

shade

Job is using the term **shade** to mean by association the evening, when the sun becomes low in the sky and shadows cover the earth. Specifically, he means the end of the work day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the evening" or "the end of the work day" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 7:3

I have been caused to inherit months of futility

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who has done the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "God has caused me to inherit months of futility" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

I have been caused to inherit months of futility

Job is speaking of these **months of futility** as if they were something that he had literally been **caused to inherit**. He means that he has been enduring futility during this time. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have been enduring a time of futility" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

I have been caused to inherit months of futility

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **futility**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "I have been enduring a time when life seems futile" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

I have been caused to inherit months of futility

From the narrative of the book of Job, it does not appear that at this point **months** have gone by since Job began to experience his terrible misfortunes. So it seems that Job is using the term **months** to mean by association a period of time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have been enduring a time of futility" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and they have appointed nights of trouble to me

The pronoun **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. Job is using this indefinite construction to focus on what has been **appointed** to him rather than on who appointed it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "and nights of trouble have been appointed to me" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 7:4

When I lie down

Job is referring implicitly to when he would **lie down** to sleep at night. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Your language may have its own expression that you could use here in your translation. Alternate translation: “When I lie down to sleep” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

When will I get up

Job is not asking himself this question for information, to try to decide when to get up in the morning. He is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “I hope this will not be a long and difficult night!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

and I am full of tossings

Job is speaking of himself as if he were a container that **tossings** filled. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and I toss and turn continually” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 7:5

My flesh wears the worm and the clod of dust

Job is speaking as if he were literally wearing worms and dust clods like clothing on his body. He means that he has these things all over his body. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly.

Alternate translation: "My flesh is covered with worms and dust clods" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

My flesh wears the worm and the clod of dust

Job is not referring to a specific **worm** or **clod of dust**. He means worms and dust clods in general. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. "My flesh is covered with worms and dust clods" (See:

Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189))

My flesh

Job is using one part of himself, his **flesh**, to mean his whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My body" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

my skin breaks and festers

Job is referring to the boils with which God allowed the accuser to afflict him, as the book describes in [2:7](#). You could indicate this in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "my skin breaks and festers because of the boils that I have" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 7:6

My days are swifter than a shuttle

Job is comparing his **days** to a **shuttle**, which stores and releases a supply of yarn for weavers, to say how quickly his days are going by. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. The UST models one way to do this. (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

My days are swifter

Job is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time, the time that he will live on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My life is ending more quickly" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

a shuttle

A **shuttle** is a wooden tool that weavers use when weaving to store and unravel yarn while passing it back and forth through other threads of yarn mounted on a loom. If your readers would not be familiar with what a shuttle is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "a tool for weaving" or "a tool for making cloth quickly" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

and they end without hope

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hope**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and I cannot hope that my life will be good in the end" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 7:7

Remember

To this point in the speech he began in 6:1, Job has been addressing his three friends, and so the pronoun **you** has been plural and the imperative forms have been second-person plural. However, the imperative **Remember** here is singular because Job is now addressing God, as he will do for the rest of this speech. So use a second-person singular imperative in your translation if your language marks that distinction. You may also wish to indicate explicitly that Job is now addressing God. Alternate translation: “God, remember” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

Remember

This is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command. Use a form in your language that communicates a polite request. It may be helpful to add an expression such as “please” to make this clear. Alternate translation: “God, please remember” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.1210)**)

my life {is} a breath

Job is speaking as if his **life** were literally a **breath**. He likely means that just as a breath of air that a person exhales quickly dissipates, so his life will soon end. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my life will be over soon” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

my eye will not return to see good

Job is using one part of himself, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I will not return to see good” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

my eye will not return to see good

In this context, the expression **return** means to do something again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I will not see good again” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

my eye will not return to see good

In this context, to **see** good means to experience it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I will not experience good again” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

my eye will not return to see good

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **good**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “I will not experience good things again” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 7:8

The eye of the one seeing me will not regard me

As the second part of the verse indicates, Job is speaking implicitly of what will happen after he dies. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “The eye of the one seeing me now will not regard me then” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

The eye of the one seeing me

Job is using one part of God, his **eye**, to mean all of God in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “The one seeing me” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

The eye of the one seeing me

Even though Job has begun to address God, here is speaking about God in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “You who see me” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

your eyes {will be} on me

This expression means that God will be looking for Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you will be looking for me” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 7:9

A cloud disappears and goes away

Job could be: (1) saying that once a cloud **disappears**, it **goes away** forever. That same cloud will never again form in the sky. Alternate translation: "Once a cloud disappears, it goes away forever" (2) using the similar expressions **disappears** and **goes away** together for emphasis. Alternate translation: "A cloud disappears entirely" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

does not ascend

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the verb **ascend**, which is contrary to the reality of life, according to Job here. Alternate translation: "remains there" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 7:10

and his place will not know him again

Job is speaking of a person's **place** of residence as if it were a living thing that could **know** that person. The word **know** in this context means to recognize. The idea is that the place where the person once lived will not have occasion to recognize him again because he will never return to that place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "no, he will not live in his place of residence again" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 7:11

I will not restrain my mouth; I will speak

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **restrain**. Job is also using an emphatic declarative form when he says **I will speak**. If your language has similar constructions that it uses for emphasis, you may want to use them here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: "I will certainly not restrain my mouth; I will certainly speak" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

I will not restrain my mouth

Job is using the term **mouth** to mean by association what he would say with his mouth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will not limit what I have to say" or "I will not refrain from speaking" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

I will not restrain my mouth

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **restrain**. Alternate translation: "I will speak freely" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

I will speak in the distress of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul

Job is using parts of himself, his **spirit** and his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of speaking and complaining. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will speak in my distress; yes, I will complain in my bitterness" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

I will speak in the distress of my spirit; I will complain in the bitterness of my soul

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **distress** and **bitterness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: "I will speak, since I am distressed; yes, I will complain, since I am bitter" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 7:12

Am} I the sea or the sea monster, that you will set a guard over me

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I am not the sea or the sea monster, so you do not need to set a guard over me!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the sea or the sea monster

See the General Introduction to Job for a discussion of the **sea monster** and see how you translated the name Leviathan in 3:8. Alternate translation: "the sea monster that is associated with chaos" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

that you will set

Job is using the future tense to indicate something that God would do out of necessity. Your language may have its own way of expressing such a meaning. Alternate translation: "that you would have to set" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

Job 7:13

When I say, 'My couch will comfort me, my bed will take away my complaint

It may be more natural in your language to have an indirect quotation here. Alternate translation: "When I say that my couch will comfort me and that my bed will take away my complaint" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p. 1167)**)

My couch will comfort me, my bed will take away my complaint

Job is using the terms **couch** and **bed** to mean sleep by association with the way people sleep on a couch or a bed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My sleep will comfort me, yes, my sleep will take away my complaint" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

My couch will comfort me, my bed will take away my complaint

Job is speaking of his **couch** and his **bed**, meaning his sleep, as if they were living things that could **comfort** him and **take away** his **complaint**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will be comfortable when I am sleeping, yes, when I am asleep I will not be complaining" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 7:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 7:15

and my soul chooses

Job is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of choosing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and I choose” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

strangling

The term **strangling** describes killing a person by squeezing his throat and stopping his breathing. If your readers would not be familiar with this term, in your translation you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “to stop breathing” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

death, rather than my bones

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “yes, my soul chooses death rather than my bones” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

death, rather than my bones

Job is using the term **bones** to mean life by association with the way people are supported by their bones as they live on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “rather than life” or “rather than continuing to live on this earth” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 7:16

I loathe

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "I loathe my life" or "I loathe being alive" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

I will not live forever

Job is using the future tense to describe what he desires. Your language may have its own way of expressing such a meaning. Alternate translation: "I would not live forever" or "I do not want to live forever" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

I will not live forever

Job says **forever** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "I certainly do not want to live for a long time" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Cease from me

Job is using this expression to ask God to **Cease** from troubling him. Your language may have an expression of its own with the same meaning. Alternate translation: "Leave me alone" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

are} vapor

Job could be using the word translated **vapor** to mean: (1) that his days are fleeting, since vapor or mist vanishes quickly. Alternate translation: "are fleeting" (2) that his days are purposeless, since vapor is insubstantial. Alternate translation: "are purposeless" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 7:17**What is man, that you will magnify him and that you will set your heart on him**

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. The question continues through the next verse, but it may be helpful to make this verse a separate sentence. Alternate translation: "Man is not so significant that you should magnify him or set your heart on him" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

What is man, that you will magnify him and that you will set your heart on him

Job could be using the future tense: (1) to describe what God should do. Alternate translation: "What is man, that you should magnify him, that you should set your heart on him" or, as a statement, "Man is so insignificant that you should not magnify him or set your heart on him" (2) to describe what God does habitually. Alternate translation: "What is man, that you magnify him and that you set your heart on him" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

and that you will set your heart on him

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts. Alternate translation: "and that you should set your mind on him" or "and that you should pay attention to him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 7:18

and you will visit him in the mornings and you will test him in the moments

Job is using the future tense to describe what he believes God should do. Your language may have its own way of expressing such a meaning. Alternate translation: "that you should visit him in the mornings and that you should test him in the moments" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

and you will visit him in the mornings and you will test him in the moments

Job is using the question form for emphasis, continuing the question that he began in the previous verse. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "You do not need to visit him in the mornings and test him in the moments!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 7:19

For how long will you not look away from me? Will you not slacken until I swallow my saliva

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "I wish you would look away from me soon! I wish you would slacken until I swallow my saliva" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Will you not slacken until I swallow my saliva

The word **until** has a specific meaning here. Job is not asking God, "Will you only slacken when I swallow my saliva?" He is asking, "Will you please slacken long enough for me to swallow my saliva?" You could say that as an alternate translation if it would be helpful to your readers. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

until I swallow my saliva

Job is using the expression **until I swallow my saliva** to mean a short time, by association with the way it only takes a short time to swallow once. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "for just a short time" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 7:20

If} I have sinned, what have I done to you, the one watching man? Why have you made me a target for you? Indeed, am I a burden to myself

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "If I have sinned, I have not done anything to you, the one watching man! You should not have made me a target for you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why have you made me a target for you

Job is speaking as if he were literally a **target** that God was attacking with arrows or a spear. He means that God is punishing him for sins he may have committed. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Why are you punishing me like this?" or, as an exclamation, "You do not need to punish me like this!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Indeed, am I a burden to myself

Job is speaking as if he were literally a heavy weight or **burden** to carry. He is referring to making life more difficult. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Indeed, am I making my own life more difficult" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Indeed, am I a burden to myself

A marginal notation in traditional manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible indicates that scribes changed this reading from "am I a burden to you" to **am I a burden to myself**. The scribes made this change in order to avoid the uncomfortable suggestion that a human being's sin could have effects on God. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT. Alternate translation: "Indeed, am I a burden to you?" or "I am not a burden to you!" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

Indeed, am I a burden to myself

Job is speaking as if he were literally a **burden** to himself or to God. He means that he is not actually making life more difficult for himself or for God, as a burden does when someone has to carry it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am not making my life more difficult!" or "I am not making your life more difficult!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 7:21

Why will you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity? For now I will lie down in the dust, and you will seek me diligently, but I will not exist

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these sentences, since in the second sentence Job gives the reason for what he says in the first sentence that God should do. Alternate translation: "Soon I will lie down in the dust, and you will seek me diligently, but I will not exist. So why will you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity?" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

Why will you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity

Job is suggesting implicitly that God should **pardon** him so that they can have a good relationship during the short time that he will still be alive on earth. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Why will you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity so that we can have a good relationship?" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Why will you not pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You ought to pardon my transgression and take away my iniquity!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

now I will lie down in the dust

Job is using the expression **lie down in the dust** to mean that he will die, by association with the way that in this culture, people who died were laid in a grave and buried in the ground or **dust**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will soon die" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 8

Job 8 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

In this chapter, Job's friend Bildad responds to what Job said in chapters 6 and 7.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Bildad answering Job with his own words

In [7:21](#), at the end of his speech, Job suggested that God might **seek** for him **diligently**. Bildad says in his response in [8:5](#) that it is actually Job who should be seeking God diligently. To help your readers appreciate how Bildad is answering Job with his own words, you may wish to translate Bildad's expression **seek diligently** the same way that you translated it when Job used it in [7:21](#).

Quotation within a quotation

In his speech, Bildad encourages Job to consider the wisdom of their ancestors. In verses 11–22, he may be quoting from traditional teachings. Notes suggest the possibility of punctuating these verses as a secondary quotation if your language might naturally put one direct quotation inside another.

Job 8:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 8:2

Until when will you say these things, and the words of your mouth {be} a mighty wind

Bildad is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Until when will you say these things, and until when will the words of your mouth be a mighty wind" (See: **Ellipsis (p. 1174)**)

Until when will you say these things, and the words of your mouth {be} a mighty wind

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should not keep saying these things, and the words of your mouth should not keep being a mighty wind!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the words of your mouth

Bildad is using the term **mouth** to mean speaking, by association with the way people use their mouths to speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the words that you speak" or see next note for another possibility. (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the words of your mouth

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: "your words" or "what you say" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

and & be} a mighty wind

Bildad is speaking as if the **words** of Job were literally a **mighty wind**. He means that Job is saying many things insistently, but they are not substantial. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and ... be so insistent but so insubstantial" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:3

Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert righteousness

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **justice** and **righteousness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: "Does God do things that are not just? Does the Almighty do things that are not righteous?" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Does God pervert justice? Or does the Almighty pervert righteousness

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "God does not pervert justice! No, the Almighty does not pervert righteousness!" or, positively, "God always does what is just! Yes, the Almighty always does what is righteous!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 8:4

then he put them in the hand of their sins

In this context, to be **in the hand of** someone or something means to be under the power or control of that person or thing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “then he put them under the power of their sins” or “then he put them under the control of their sins” (See: **Idiom (p. 1207)**)

then he put them in the hand of their sins

Bildad is speaking as if the **sins** of Job's **children** were a living thing that had exerted power over them and killed them. He actually means that God killed Job's children in order to punish them for their sins. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “then God punished them by killing them for the sins they committed” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 8:5

If you seek diligently for God

For emphasis, Bildad is stating the pronoun **you**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **seek diligently**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: "If you seek diligently for God yourself" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and to the Almighty you appeal

Bildad is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and if to the Almighty you appeal" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 8:6

pure and upright

The terms **pure** and **upright** mean similar things. Bildad is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “truly righteous” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

he will rouse himself for you

One possible meaning of the expression translated **rouse himself** is “wake up.” If there is already a Bible translation in your region, it may say something like this. Bildad could be speaking as if God were sleeping and would literally wake up at the realization that Job needed and deserved help. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he will come quickly to help you” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the habitation of your righteousness

Bildad is using one aspect of Job, his **righteousness**, to mean all of him as a righteous person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “your habitation as a righteous person” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the habitation of your righteousness

Bildad is speaking of the situation that he believes Job would deserve as a righteous person as if that situation were literally a **habitation** or place where Job would live. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “restore you to the situation in life that a righteous person deserves” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:7

Though your beginning was small, yet your end will increase greatly

Since, as 1:3 states, Job was previously the greatest man in a vast area, it is not the case that his **beginning**, that is, his former condition, was **small**. Bildad actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of what he is saying. He means that Job's former state, great though it was, will seem small by comparison with the much greater prosperity that Job will experience in the future if he seeks God diligently. Alternate translation: "Though your former state was great, your future will be so much greater that the former state will seem as if it had been small" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

yet your end will increase greatly

Bildad is speaking of Job's **end**, that is, his ultimate condition in life, as if it were a living thing that could **increase**. He means that Job's prosperity will increase greatly in the end. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "yet your prosperity will increase greatly in the end" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 8:8

inquire now of the former generations

Bildad is speaking as if Job could literally ask the people of **former generations** for advice. He means that Job should consider the wisdom that those people passed down to their descendants through tradition. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “consider the traditional wisdom that the former generations have passed down to us” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

their fathers

Bildad is using the term **fathers** to mean “ancestors.” If your readers would misunderstand this, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “their ancestors” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:9

we {are} of yesterday and we do not know

Bildad is saying that he, Job, and the other two friends were only born **yesterday** and that they do **not know** anything. He says both of these things as overstatements for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “we have not been alive for very long and we do not know very much” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

we {are} & and we do not know, & our days

By **we** and **our**, Bildad means himself and the other friends and also Job, to whom he is speaking, so use the inclusive form of those words in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.1181)**)

our days on earth {are} a shadow

Bildad is speaking as if the **days** that he and Job and the other friends have **on earth** were literally a **shadow**. He means that just as a shadow appears only for a short time, so people are only on earth for a short time. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “our days on earth are fleeting” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

our days on earth {are} a shadow

Bildad is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “our time on earth is a shadow” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 8:10

Will they not teach you? They will speak to you, and from their hearts they will bring forth words

The pronouns **they** and **their** refer to the “former generations,” that is, the ancestors whom Bildad described in verse 8. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Will the former generations not teach you? Our ancestors will speak to you, and from their hearts they will bring forth words” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Will they not teach you? They will speak to you, and from their hearts they will bring forth words

Bildad is speaking as if Job’s ancestors would **teach** him and **speak to** him. He does not mean this literally. Instead, he means that Job can learn from the accumulated wisdom that has been passed down to them from their ancestors through tradition. Bildad will summarize this traditional teaching in the rest of his speech. Particularly if there is a practice of ancestor worship in your culture, be sure to make this meaning clear in your translation. Alternate translation: “You can learn much from the traditional teachings we have received from them. It would be as if they were speaking to you and bringing forth words from their hearts” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Will they not teach you

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “They will certainly teach you.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

and from their hearts they will bring forth words

Bildad is speaking as if the ancestors would literally **bring forth words** from **their hearts**, as if their hearts were containers that held words and as if words were physical objects that someone could **bring forth**. He is using the word **hearts** to mean a person’s thoughts and emotions. He is saying that through tradition the ancestors have passed down their most cherished beliefs and the most profound lessons they learned in life. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and they will share with you their most cherished insights” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:11

Does papyrus grow without a marsh? Does a reed grow without waters

From here to the end of the chapter, Bildad may be quoting the teaching of the ancestors. This would be a second-level quotation, since the book is already quoting Bildad's speech. If you think it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate the start of this possible quotation from tradition with an opening second-level quotation mark or with some other punctuation or convention that your language uses to indicate the start of a second-level quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.1274)**)

Does papyrus grow without a marsh? Does a reed grow without waters

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Papyrus does not grow without a marsh. A reed does not grow without waters." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

papyrus

The word **papyrus** describes a tall, reed-like plant that grows in shallow water. If your readers would not be familiar with what papyrus is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable plant in your area, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "a bulrush" or "a cattail" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 8:12

in its greenness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **greenness**, you could express the same idea in another way. The idea is that while marsh plants dry up and lose color at the end of their life cycles, this is a young plant that is still colorful and growing. Alternate translation: “young and growing” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

but it withers before any {other} plant

Bildad assumes that Job will understand that he means that even a young, uncut reed **withers** without water. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “but without water it withers before any other plant” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

but it withers before any {other} plant

Bildad says **any** as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “but without water it withers very quickly” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 8:13

Thus {are} the paths of all the ones forgetting God

Bildad is speaking of the things that happen to people as if they were literally **paths** that those people were walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "This is what happens to all the ones forgetting God" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and the hope of the godless will perish

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hope**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and the godless will not get what they hope for" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the godless

Bildad is using the adjective **godless** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "a godless person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 8:14

whose confidence snaps and whose trust {is} the house of a spider

Bildad is speaking as if the **confidence** of a person who is godless literally **snaps** and as if the **trust** of a godless person were literally a spider's web (**the house of a spider**). If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "whose confidence proves unfounded and whose trust is unreliable" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

whose confidence snaps and whose trust {is} the house of a spider

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **confidence** and **trust**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "He is confident that certain things will happen, but they do not happen; he trusts in certain people and things to help him, but they do not" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and & trust {is} the house of a spider

Bildad is using **the house of a spider** (that is, a spider's web) to represent something flimsy and unreliable. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly as a comparison. Alternate translation: "and whose trust is as flimsy and unreliable as a spider's web" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:15

He leans himself against his house and it does not stand; he takes hold of it, but it does not arise

Bildad is speaking of a godless person as if he were literally leaning against his **house** and causing it to collapse beyond repair. The house represents the possessions and status of the godless person. Alternate translation: "It does not take much for a godless person to lose his possessions and status without any hope of recovering them" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and it does not stand; & but it does not arise

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use positive statements in your translation in place of these negative ones. Alternate translation: "and it collapses ... but it remains collapsed" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

but it does not arise

Bildad is speaking of the **house** of a godless person as if it were a living thing that could **arise** on its own. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but he cannot make it stand upright again" or "but he cannot repair it" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 8:16

It {is} lush to the face of the sun, and its shoots go out over its garden

Bildad now speaks of a godless person as if he were a plant. In order to depict the temporary prosperity that godless people may enjoy, he describes this plant flourishing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning as a comparison. Alternate translation: "A godless person may at first thrive like a plant that is getting plenty of sunlight and whose shoots extend all over the garden in which it is planted" (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

to the face of the sun

Here the word **to the face of** means "in front of" or "in the presence of" something. Bildad means that the plant is **lush** because it receives plenty of sunlight. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "because it receives plenty of sunlight" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:17

Its roots are wrapped around a heap; it looks for a house of rocks

Bildad is continuing to speak of the godless person and his temporary prosperity as if he were a plant. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "A godless person may at first be secure, like a plant whose roots are wrapped around a heap of stones, a plant that is solidly rooted among stones" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Its roots are wrapped around a heap

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "It wraps its roots around a heap of stones" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

it looks for a house of rocks

Bildad is speaking as if this plant were looking for a **house** to live in. He means that the plant naturally roots itself in a secure place among **rocks**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it roots itself in a secure place among rocks" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 8:18

When

In this verse, Bildad is drawing a contrast between the prosperity he described in the previous two verses and the inevitable destruction of the godless person. In your translation, you may wish to introduce this verse in a way that will indicate this contrast more explicitly. Alternate translation: “But when” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

one destroys it from its place, then it will deny

The pronoun **it** refers in its first and third instances to the plant Bildad has been describing, and it refers in its second instance to the **place** the plant was occupying. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “When one destroys such a plant from its place, then the place it formerly occupied will deny it” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

then it will deny him, ‘I did not see you

It may be more natural in your language to have an indirect quotation here. Alternate translation: “It will deny that it ever saw it” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1167)**)

then it will deny him, ‘I did not see you

Bildad is speaking of the plant’s location as if it were a living thing that could recognize things and speak. The meaning of this phrase is similar to the meaning of the phrase “his place will not know him again” in [7:10](#). In this case, Bildad is saying that the plant will be so thoroughly removed that its former location will be convinced that it was never there to begin with. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “it will be as if it had never been there at all” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 8:19

the joy of his way

Bildad actually means to communicate the opposite of the literal meaning of his words. He is speaking in this way for emphasis. He does not mean that the godless person has actual **joy**. Such a person may have temporary prosperity, but he then experiences sorrow as a consequence of the way he has been living. Alternate translation: "the sorrow of his way" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

the joy of his way

Bildad is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** or path that the person was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the sorrow that comes from his conduct" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and from the dust other {plants} will sprout

Bildad is continuing to speak as if the godless person were a plant. When he says that **other plants** will **sprout** from the **dust** (that is, the ground), he means that other people will take the place of the godless person when his conduct causes his ruin. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and other people will take his position and his possessions" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:20

God will not reject the innocent

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **reject**. Alternate translation: "God will always accept the innocent" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

the innocent

Bildad is using the adjective **innocent** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "a person who is innocent" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

but he will not hold the hand of evildoers

Bildad is speaking as if God would literally **hold** evildoers by the **hand** in order to keep them from falling down. He means that God does not strengthen or support people who do evil. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but he will not help evildoers" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 8:21

He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, your lips with shouting

Bildad is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, and he will fill your lips with shouting" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, your lips with shouting

Bildad is speaking of Job's **mouth** as if it were a container that God would **fill** with **laughter** and as if Job's **lips** were a container that God would fill with **shouting**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He will yet make you shout very joyfully" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, your lips with shouting

Bildad is using parts of Job, his **mouth** and his **lips**, to mean all of Job in the acts of laughing and shouting joyfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He will yet make you laugh very happily and shout very joyfully" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 8:22

will wear shame

Bildad is speaking as if Job's enemies would literally **wear shame** as if it were their clothing. He means that they will be greatly ashamed for opposing Job when God honors and restores him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "will be greatly ashamed" (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

and the tent of the wicked will not exist

Bildad is using one possession of **the wicked**, the **tent** in which they live, to mean all of their possessions and their standing in the community. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and the wicked will be without status or means" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the wicked

Bildad is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "wicked people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

will not exist

If you decided to punctuate verses 11–22 as a second-level quotation, indicate the end of this quotation here with a closing second-level quotation mark or whatever other punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate the end of a second-level quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.1274)**)

Job 9

Job 9 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is Job's response to Bildad's first speech. In 8:5, Bildad told Job that he should appeal to God. In response, Job protests in this chapter that a human being cannot appeal to God.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Litany

In verses 5–10, Job makes a series of statements about how powerful God is. These specific statements illustrate the general statement that Job makes in verse 4 that God is “wise in heart and mighty in strength.” A series of statements such as this is known as a litany. If your readers would recognize what Job is doing, you can translate and format this litany the way the ULT does. If the litany form would not be familiar to your readers, you could format the general statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that shows the overall meaning of what Job is saying. You could then put each sentence of the litany on a separate line. The format might look something like this:

God is wise in heart and mighty in strength (Who has hardened himself against him and been whole?),

the one removing mountains and they do not know, who overturns them in his anger, the one shaking the earth from its place and causing its pillars to tremble, the one speaking to the sun and it does not rise, and upon the stars he seals, stretching out the heavens by himself and treading on the waves of the sea, making the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades, and the chambers of the south, doing great {things} until there is no searching and distinguished {things} until there is no number.

Job 9:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 9:2

But how will a man be righteous with God

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "But a man cannot be righteous with God!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "a person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 9:3

If he desires to contend with him

In this part of the verse, the pronoun **he** refers to “a man” and the pronoun **him** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “If a person desires to contend with God” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

to contend with him

Job assumes that Bildad will understand that he is using the word **contend** to mean making a formal legal complaint against God. In this culture, people made such complaints to community leaders in public places such as the gate of a town. Each party would question the other in the presence of the leaders, who would then discuss the case and decide how to resolve it. Job is probably describing how he participated as a leader in such cases in [29:21–23](#). Your language may have an expression for this process that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “to take God to court” or “to file charges against God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

he will not answer him

In this part of the verse, (1) the pronoun **he** could refer to a human being and the pronoun **him** could refer to God. This seems likely, since after describing God’s knowledge and power, Job asks in [9:14](#) how he could possibly answer God and in [9:32](#) he says that God is “not a man, as I am, that I could answer him.” Alternate translation: “a human will not answer God” (2) the pronoun **he** could refer to God and the pronoun **him** could refer to a human being. This is also a possibility, since Job protests in [30:20](#) that God does not answer him. Alternate translation: “God will not answer a human” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he will not answer him

If Job means that a human will not answer God, then he is using the future tense to describe what a person would be able to do. Your language may have its own way of expressing such a meaning. Alternate translation: “he could not answer him” or “he would not be able to answer him” (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

one from a thousand

The expression **not ... one from a thousand** (that is, not one time out of a thousand) is an overstatement for emphasis. It is unlikely that one party in a court case would ask the other party as many as a thousand questions. Job means that a person would not find a single way to answer God satisfactorily no matter how many questions God asked. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “no matter how many questions he asks” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 9:4

He is} wise in heart

The pronoun **He** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God is wise in heart” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

He is} wise in heart and mighty in strength

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts. Alternate translation: “God’s thoughts are wise and he is mighty in strength” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and mighty in strength

The terms **mighty** and **strength** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “and very strong” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Who has hardened himself against him and been whole

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “No person has ever hardened himself against God and been whole!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

has hardened himself against him

Job is likely referring to bringing charges against God when he speaks of a person who has **hardened himself against** God, since a person who brings charges has determined not to show mercy. Rather, that person has decided to demand justice. You could indicate this in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “has brought charges against him” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and been whole

By **whole**, Job probably means not suffering any damages, that is, winning a court case and having the other party pay compensation, rather than having to pay compensation oneself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and won the case” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 9:5

the one removing mountains

When Job refers to God removing **mountains**, he is likely describing earthquakes. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say that explicitly in your translation, as the UST does. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the one removing mountains

The pronoun **one** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "God is the one who removes mountains" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and they do not know

This could mean: (1) that the **mountains** do not know that God is about to remove them. In that case Job would be speaking of the mountains as if they were living things that could **know** something that was about to happen. (2) that people in general do not know that God is about to remove the mountains. In that case **they** would be an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. Either way, the idea is that God removes mountains without anyone or anything knowing in advance. Alternate translation: "suddenly" or "unexpectedly" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

in his nose

As the General Introduction to Job discusses, Job is using the term **nose** to mean anger by association with the way that a person who is angry breathes heavily through his nose. Your language and culture may also associate anger with a particular part of the body. If so, you could use an expression involving that part of the body in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "in his anger" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 9:6

and causing its pillars to tremble

People in this culture believed that there were **pillars** holding up the earth. You could retain the reference to pillars in your translation and it may seem like a figure of speech to your readers. Alternatively, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and causing it to tremble from deep underground” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 9:7

the one speaking to the sun and it does not rise

Job is speaking as if the **sun** literally did not **rise** on certain days. He most likely means that the sun is not visible on those days because of cloud cover. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the one who determines whether the sun will shine or clouds will cover it” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and upon the stars he seals

Job is speaking as if God literally put a seal over **the stars** on certain nights. He most likely means that the stars are not visible on those nights because of cloud cover. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and who keeps the stars from shining on certain nights” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 9:8

stretching out the heavens by himself and treading on the waves of the sea

People in this culture believed that the **heavens** (that is, the sky) were a solid object that God had stretched out over a framework in order to cover the earth. For example, [Isaiah 40:22](#) says, “He stretches out the heavens like a curtain and spreads them out like a tent to live in.” You could retain the reference to God **stretching out the heavens** in your translation, and it may seem like a figure of speech to your readers. Alternatively, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “God alone created the sky and treads on the waves of the sea” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and treading on the waves of the sea

As a note to [7:12](#) explains, people in this culture considered the **sea** to be the realm of chaos. When Job speaks of God **treading on the waves of the sea**, he is speaking as if God were literally trampling down the forces of chaos with his feet. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and subduing the watery forces of chaos” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 9:9

the Bear, Orion, the Pleiades

The words **Bear**, **Orion**, and **Pleiades** are the names of constellations of stars in the sky. Your culture may have its own terms for these constellations. Alternate translation: “the Big Dipper, the Hunter, and the Seven Sisters” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

and the chambers of the south

People in this culture believed that God kept natural forces in **chambers**. For example, [Psalm 19:4-5](#) says that God has “pitched a tent for the sun” in the sky, from which the sun comes forth “like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber.” [Psalm 135:7](#) refers similarly to God bringing the wind out of his “storehouses.” In [Job 37:9](#), Elihu says that “the storm comes from its chamber.” So the reference here to **the chambers of the south** is likely to a place where, it was believed, God kept all the constellations of stars and from which God brought them out each night. You could retain the reference to these **chambers** in your translation and it may seem like a figure of speech to your readers. Alternatively, you could state the meaning plainly. Job is likely referring to the constellations themselves by association with their **chambers**. Alternate translation: “and all the other constellations” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 9:10

great {things} & and distinguished {things}

Job is using the adjective **great** and the participle **distinguished** as nouns to mean certain kinds of things. The ULT adds the word **things** to show this. Your language may use adjectives and participles in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent terms. Alternate translation: “wonders ... and marvels” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 9:11

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 9:12

If he takes away, who will turn him back? Who will say to him, 'What are you doing

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "If he takes something away, no one can bring it back. No one can ask him, 'What are you doing?'" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

who will turn him back

The meaning of **who will turn him back** depends on the meaning of the phrase **he takes away**. That phrase could mean: (1) that God takes something away. Alternate translation: "who can make him give it back" (2) that God leaves. Alternate translation: "who can make him come back" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Who will say to him, 'What are you doing

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "Who can ask him what he is doing" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

What are you doing

The person challenging God would be using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should not be doing that!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 9:13

God will not turn aside his nose

See how you translated the word **nose** in verse 5. Alternate translation: “God will not turn aside his anger” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

God will not turn aside his nose

Job is speaking as if God might literally make his anger **turn aside** and go in a different direction. Job is actually describing how God might stop being angry (although in this case he would not). If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God will not stop being angry” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

God will not turn aside his nose

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this as a positive expression. Alternate translation: “God will still have anger” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

of Rahab

The word **Rahab** is another name for the sea monster. See the General Introduction to Job for a discussion of the **sea monster**, and see how you translated the name Leviathan in [3:8](#). Alternate translation: “the sea monster that is associated with chaos” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

the helpers of Rahab

When Job speaks of **the helpers of Rahab**, he likely means ocean waves, since he says in [9:8](#), in a context of overcoming chaos, that God treads on the waves of the sea. Alternate translation: “the chaotic ocean waves” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

bow beneath him

Job is speaking of **the helpers of Rahab**, most likely meaning the waves of the sea, as if they were a living thing that could **bow** to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “are under his control” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 9:14

Indeed that I will answer him

Indeed that is an expression that indicates that what follows is greater in degree than what a person has just said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “How much less would I be able to answer him” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Indeed that I will answer him

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **will answer**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “How much less would a mere mortal such as I be able to answer him” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

choose words with him

Job is using the expression **choose words** to mean by association arguing a case against God, since he would have to **choose** the right **words** in order to do that. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “argue a case against him” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 9:15

whom, if I were righteous, I would not answer

The pronoun **whom** refers to text. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "Even if I were righteous, I would not try to answer God" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

if I were righteous

By **righteous**, in this context Job implicitly means being the unjustly injured party in a lawsuit. Your language may have an expression for this that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "if I were in the right" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I would plead to my judge for mercy

Job implicitly means that he would plead to God as his **judge**. He is not talking about appealing to some other legal authority to judge between him and God. You could indicate this in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I would plead for mercy to God as my judge" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 9:16

he was giving ear to

Job is using the expression **giving ear** to mean listening, by association with the way that people listen with their ears. However, this specific expression has the sense of listening carefully, that is, paying attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he was paying attention to" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

my voice

Job is using one part of himself, his **voice**, to mean all of him in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what I was saying" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 9:17

with a tempest

When Job says that God would send a **tempest** or violent storm to **break** (destroy) him if he challenged God, Job could be using the storm to represent various troubles that God would cause him to experience. However, since God does approach Job in a violent storm at the end of the book, it would be appropriate to retain the term **tempest** in your translation rather than interpret the term as symbolic. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 9:18

He does not allow me to cause my breath to return, for he fills me with bitterness

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “He fills me with bitterness, and by doing that, he does not allow me to cause my breath to return” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

to cause my breath to return

This expression means to rest in order to start breathing regularly again after exertion or extended speaking. Your language may have an expression for this that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “to catch my breath” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

he fills me with bitterness

Job is speaking of himself as if he were a container that God **fills** with **bitterness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he causes me great bitterness” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he fills me with bitterness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **bitterness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “he makes my life very bitter” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 9:19

If to strength, & And if to justice

If to is an expression that introduces a matter under consideration. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If it is a matter of strength ... Or if it is a matter of justice" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

who will summon him

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "no one is able to summon him!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 9:20

I were righteous

See how you translated the term **righteous** in 9:15. In this context, the term **righteous** implicitly describes being the unjustly injured party in a lawsuit. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I were in the right" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

my mouth would condemn me

Job is using the term **mouth** to mean by association what he would say by using his mouth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what I said would condemn me" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

my mouth would condemn me

Job is speaking of his **mouth** as if it were a living thing that could **condemn** him. He means that God would condemn him for what he said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God would condemn me for what I said" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 9:21

I do not know my soul

In this context, the word **know** means to have regard for something or to be concerned about something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am not concerned about my soul" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

I do not know my soul

Job is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am not concerned about myself" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 9:22

It {is} one

The expression **It is one** could mean: (1) that God treats everyone in the same way. Alternate translation: “There is only one way that God treats people” (2) that the same thing would happen to Job whether he was righteous or unrighteous. Alternate translation: “There is only one thing that will happen to me whether I am good or bad” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

therefore I have said, The blameless and the wicked, he is destroying

Job has not said these specific words earlier, although they are a summary of what he has been saying to this point in his speech. So it may be more natural in your language to make this a direct quotation. Alternate translation: “that is why I have been saying that God destroys both the blameless and the wicked” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1167)**)

The blameless and the wicked

Job is using the adjectives **blameless** and **wicked** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “Both blameless people and wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 9:23

a scourge suddenly kills

Job is speaking of the disasters that people experience in life as if they were literally a **scourge** or whip that was punishing them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “disasters suddenly kill people” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the despair of the innocent {ones}

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **despair**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “innocent people when they despair” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the innocent {ones}

Job is using the adjective **innocent** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. The ULT adds the word **ones** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “people who are innocent” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 9:24

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked

Here, **hand** represents the power and control that people have over something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "The earth has been put under the control of the wicked" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

The earth is given into the hand of the wicked

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "God has given the earth into the hand of the wicked" or "God has put the earth under the control of the wicked" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

The earth is given

Job is using the term **earth** to mean by association the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "The people who live on the earth have been given" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

He covers the faces of its judges

Job is speaking as if God literally **covers the faces** of **judges**. He means that God keeps these judges from recognizing how to decide cases fairly. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He keeps judges from recognizing how to decide cases fairly" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

If not

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "If it is not God who does these things" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 9:25

And my days are swifter than a runner, they flee

Job is speaking of the **days** of his life as if they were a living thing that could run fast and **flee**. This could mean: (1) that Job is quickly using up his days, that is, he is rapidly approaching the end of his life. Alternate translation: "And I am using up my days very quickly" (2) that each of Job's days goes by quickly. Alternate translation: "And each of my days seems very short" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

They do not see good

Here, as in [7:7](#), to **see** good means to experience it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They do not experience good" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

They do not see good

Job is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean a certain kind of experience. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "They do not experience good things" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

They do not see good

Job is speaking of the **days** of his life as if they were a living thing that could experience good things or fail to experience them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I do not experience good things during my days" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 9:26

They glide with boats of papyrus

Job is speaking as if the days of his life literally **glide** across the water together with **boats of papyrus**. As in the previous verse, he means that his days move very quickly. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am running out of days as quickly as a papyrus boat glides across the water" or "Each of my days goes by as quickly as a papyrus boat glides across the water" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

as an eagle pounces on food

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "as quickly as an eagle pounces on food" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

food

Job is using a general term, **food**, to one specific kind of food, the kind an **eagle** would catch and eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "its prey" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 9:27

If I said, 'Let me forget my complaint, let me change my face, let me be cheerful

It may be more natural in your language to have an indirect quotation here. Alternate translation: "If I told myself that I should forget my complaint and change my face and be cheerful" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p. 1167)**)

Let me forget my complaint

When Job speaks of changing his **face** (that is, the expression on his face), he means by association feeling differently so that the expression on his face will change. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Let me feel differently about this" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 9:28

I would fear all my sorrows; I know that you would not acquit me

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “because I know that you would not acquit me, I would fear all my sorrows” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

I would fear all my sorrows

Job is speaking implicitly of the **sorrows** he knows he would still experience when God punished him for the things God would consider him guilty of doing. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “I would still fear all the sorrows that I would experience because of your punishments” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

you would not acquit me

The pronoun **you** is singular because it refers to God rather than to the three friends. So use the second-person singular in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Even though to this point in this speech Job has been protesting that he cannot argue his case with God, here he addresses God directly, as he did in [7:7-21](#) and as he will do later in this speech in [10:2-22](#). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “you, God, would not acquit me” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

Job 9:29

I am wicked; why

This could mean: (1) that in order to convey emphasis, Job is saying the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what Job actually means and convey the emphasis another way. Alternate translation: “God thinks I am wicked! So why” (2) that without intending to convey emphasis, Job is describing how he believes God would regard him. Alternate translation: “Since God would consider me to be wicked anyway, why” (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

I am wicked

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **know**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “I am a wicked person” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

why, then, would I toil in vain

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “there is no reason for me to toil in vain” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

would I toil in vain

By **toil**, Job implicitly means working hard to prove his innocence. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “would I work hard in vain to prove my innocence” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 9:30

If I washed myself with water of snow and cleansed my hands with lye

Job is speaking hypothetically of something he might do as a symbolic action to show that he is genuinely innocent. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "If I washed myself with water of snow and cleansed my hands with lye to show how innocent I am" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

with water of snow

The implication is that **water** from freshly melting **snow** is very pure. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "with very pure water" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

with lye

The word **lye** describes a cleansing agent made from the ashes created by burning certain plants. If your readers would not be familiar with what lye is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable substance in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "with a strong cleansing agent" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 9:31

you would plunge me into a ditch

Job is speaking hypothetically of something he believes God would do as a symbolic action to show that God considered him guilty rather than innocent. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “you would plunge me into a ditch to show how guilty you considered me to be” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

you would plunge me

The word **you** is singular here because Job is once again addressing God directly. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

into a ditch

By **a ditch**, Job implicitly means a ditch full of dirty water that would make his body dirty all over. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “into a ditch full of dirty water” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and my clothes would abhor me

Job is speaking of his **clothes** as if it were a living thing that could **abhor** him. He means that the water in the ditch would make his body so dirty that his own clothes would not want to be on his body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and my body would become very dirty” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 9:32

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 9:33

who would lay his hand upon the two of us

A judge would **lay his hand** on the opposing parties in a case as a symbolic action to show that he was bringing them both under his judicial authority. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “who would lay his hand upon the two of us to show that he had the authority to decide our case” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 9:34

who would turn from upon me his rod, and his terror

The pronoun **who** refers to a judge who might decide Job's case against God, and the pronoun **his** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "There is no judge who could turn God's rod from upon me and God's terror" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

his rod

Job is speaking as if God were literally using a **rod** or stick to punish him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "his punishment" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and his terror, may it not frighten me

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from earlier in the sentence if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and turn his terror from upon me, so that it would not frighten me" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 9:35

I would speak and I would not fear him

Job means implicitly that he would do these things if there were someone to judge between him and God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "If there were someone to judge between us, I would speak and I would not fear him" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I would speak

Job is using an emphatic verbal form. Your language may have a similar form that you could use in your translation. If not, you could express the emphasis another way. Alternate translation: "I would certainly speak"

I {am} not thus with me

Interpreters are unsure what this expression means. It could possibly mean: (1) Alternate translation: "That is not how things are with me at the moment" (2) Alternate translation: "I am not the kind of person who would do that now" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 10

Job 10 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

In this chapter, Job finishes responding to Bildad's first speech. As he did in chapter 7, Job speaks to God in light of his exchange with his friend, although in this case Job describes what he would say to God rather than addressing God directly.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Rhetorical questions

In many places in this chapter, Job uses the question form in order to express strong feelings. Your language might not use the question form for this purpose. Notes will suggest other ways to translate these questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Extended quotation

Starting in verse 2 and continuing through the end of the chapter, Job quotes what he would say to God if he could argue his case with him. If your language would not naturally put one direct quotation inside another, you could translate what Job says as an indirect quotation. A note to verse 2 suggests how to start doing that. You could follow the same approach throughout the rest of the chapter.

Job 10:1

My soul is weary & in the bitterness of my soul

Job is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am weary ... in my bitterness" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

I will abandon my complaint upon myself

In this expression, to **abandon** something **upon** oneself means not to restrain it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will complain without restraining myself" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 10:2

I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me; cause me to know for what you are accusing me

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, this is the beginning of a long quotation within a quotation. Job is telling his friends what he would like to tell God. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this and the rest of the chapter so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "I will tell God not to condemn me but to cause me to know for what he is accusing me" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

I will say to God, 'Do not condemn me; cause me to know for what you are accusing me

If you decide to translate what Job says he would tell God as a direct quotation, you could indicate the start of the quotation with an opening second-level quotation mark or with some other punctuation or convention that your language uses to indicate the start of a second-level quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.1274)**)

Do not condemn me; cause me to know

Job means implicitly that he does not want God to condemn him without letting him know why he is condemning him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Do not condemn me without causing me to know" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 10:3

Is it good to you that you will oppress {me}, that you will despise the work of your hands, but on the plans of the wicked you shine

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should not consider it good to oppress me, to despise the work of your hands, while you shine on the plans of the wicked!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the work of your hands

Job is using one part of God, his **hands**, to mean all of him in the act of working to make something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "your own work" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

but on the plans of the wicked you shine

When Job says that God would **shine**, he means that God would have a glowing, approving expression on his face. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but on the plans of the wicked you smile" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

but on the plans of the wicked you shine

Job is using one part of giving and showing approval, the act of visibly smiling, to mean the entire act of approving. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but you approve of what the wicked plan to do" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the wicked

Job is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "wicked people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 10:4

Are} eyes of flesh to you? If you see according to the seeing of a man

Job is using the terms **eyes** and **seeing** to mean by association knowing and understanding, since people often discover things by seeing them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Do you only know and understand the kinds of things that people can see with their eyes" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Are} eyes of flesh to you? If you see according to the seeing of a man

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You do not have eyes of flesh! You do not see according to the seeing of a man!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Are} eyes of flesh to you

Job is using the expression **of flesh** to mean "human," by association with the way that humans have flesh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Do you have human eyes?" or "You do not have human eyes!" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

If you see according to the seeing of a man

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "You do not see as people see, do you?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

according to the seeing of a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "as people do" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 10:5

Are} your days like the days of a man? If your years {are} like the days of a man

Job is asking implicitly whether God has the same number of **days** and **years** as a human being, not whether God experiences the kind of **days** and **years** that people do. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Is the number of your days the same as the number of the days that a man has, or is the number of your years the same as the number of days that a person has” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Are} your days like the days of a man? If your years {are} like the days of a man

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations, not continuing this sentence into the following two verses. Alternate translation: “Your days are not like the days of a man! No, your years are not like the days of a person!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Are} your days like the days of a man? If your years {are} like the days of a man

Job is using the terms **days** and **years** to mean by association the lifetime of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could combine the two phrases and state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Do you have as short a lifetime as people do” or “You do not have as short a lifetime as people do!” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

a man? & a man

In this verse, the two instances of the word **man** translate two different words that have essentially the same meaning. Both of these masculine terms have a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “a mortal ... a human being” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

like the days of

If it would be more natural in your language, you could say “years” instead of **days** here. This would maintain a parallel between the two parts of this verse without making any significant change in meaning. (The original reading may have been “years”; many translations say that.) Alternate translation: “like the years of” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

If your years {are} like the days of a man

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “Your years are not like the days of a man, are they?” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 10:6

that you seek for my iniquity and for my sin you search

In this verse and the previous one, Job seems to be asking implicitly whether God is seeking urgently to discover whether he has sinned because God has only a short time to live and God wants to discover this before he dies. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "Is that why you seek for my iniquity and search for my sin" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

that you seek for my iniquity and for my sin you search

These two phrases mean similar things. Job is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express, to convey his sense that God is seeking urgently to find out whether he has sinned. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine the phrases and express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "that you seek so urgently to discover whether I have sinned" or "Is that why you seek so urgently to discover whether I have sinned" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

that you seek for my iniquity and for my sin you search

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. If you chose not to continue the sentence from the previous verse in order to translate the questions there as statements or exclamations, this would be a new sentence. You could also choose not to continue it into the next verse. Alternate translation: "You do not need to seek for my iniquity and search for my sin!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 10:7

above your knowledge that I am not wicked and there is no one rescuing {me} from your hand

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. If you chose not to continue the sentence from the previous verse in order to translate the question there as a statement or as an exclamation, this would be a new sentence. Alternate translation: "After all, you know that I am not wicked, and there is no one rescuing me from your hand!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

above your knowledge

In this expression, **above** means "in addition to." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "even though you know that" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and there is no one rescuing {me} from your hand

The implication seems to be that God does not need to seek urgently to discover whether Job has sinned, because Job cannot escape from God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and that I cannot escape from you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

from your hand

Job is using one part of God, his **hand**, to mean all of him in the act of apprehending Job as a wrongdoer. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from you" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 10:8

Your hands formed me and made me

The terms **formed** and **made** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "Indeed, your hands created me" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Your hands

Job is using one part of God, his **hands**, to mean all of him in the act of making Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "You" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 10:9

you made me like clay

The point of this comparison is that God molded Job's body as one molds clay to make things. Job is not saying that God made him to be like clay. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "you molded my body as one molds clay" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and will you turn me into dust

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "so please do not turn me into dust again!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 10:10

Have you not poured me like milk and caused me to curdle like cheese

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You have poured me like milk and caused me to curdle like cheese." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Have you not poured me like milk and caused me to curdle like cheese

The point of this comparison is that just as one pours out **milk** and curdles it to make **cheese**, so God has created Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "You are the one who has created me, just as one creates cheese out of milk" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 10:11

You have clothed me with skin and flesh and you have knit me together with bones and tendons

Ordinarily one builds the inside of something before its outside, so you might find it more natural to put the information about the **bones and tendons** before the information about the **skin and flesh**. Alternate translation: "You knit me together with bones and tendons and then you clothed me with skin and flesh" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

You have clothed me with skin and flesh

Job is speaking as if God had literally **clothed** him with **skin and flesh**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "You have covered my body with skin and flesh" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and you have knit me together with bones and tendons

Job is speaking as if God had literally **knit** him **together** with **bones and tendons**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and you have given me a supportive skeletal system of bones and tendons" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 10:12

You made life and covenant faithfulness alongside me

The implication is that God made these things **alongside** Job so that they would accompany him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “You caused life and covenant faithfulness to accompany me” or “You made sure that I would experience life and covenant faithfulness” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and your visitation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **visitation**, you could express the same idea in another way. In this context, the word **visitation** does not indicate that God spent time with Job temporarily but that he was always present with him. Alternate translation: “and your presence” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

my spirit

Job is using one part of himself, his **spirit**, to mean all of him, with an emphasis on him being alive. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “me” or “my life” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 10:13

But in your heart you hid these things

Job is speaking as if God literally **hid** certain **things** in his **heart**. Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts and motives. Job means that God was secretly planning certain things. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "But you were secretly planning these things" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

this {was} with you

The expression **this was with you** means "this is what you were thinking." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "this is what you were thinking" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 10:14

and you would not acquit me of my iniquity

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this with a positive expression. Alternate translation: "and you would declare me guilty of my iniquity" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

and you would not acquit me of my iniquity

The implication is that God would punish Job for his **iniquity** if God did not **acquit** him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and you would punish me for my iniquity" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 10:15

If I am wicked, woe to me! And {if} I am righteous, I will not lift my head. I am} full of disgrace. Yes, see my affliction

If it would be more natural in your language, you could put the phrase **I will not lift my head** at the end of this verse, since the material that follows this phrase gives the reason for the result that it describes. Alternate translation: “And even if I am righteous, because I am nevertheless full of disgrace—yes, see my affliction!—I will not lift my head” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

I will not lift my head

Job is saying that he would not **lift** his **head** (that is, he would look down) as a symbolic action to express that he was feeling shame. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. There may be some physical gesture with the same meaning in your culture that you could use in your translation. You could also use a general expression. Alternate translation: “I will still look down in shame” or “I will still cover my eyes in shame” or “I will still act ashamed” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

I am} full of disgrace

For emphasis, Job is speaking of himself as if he were a container that **disgrace** could fill. If it would be helpful in your language, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “I feel very disgraced” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Yes, see my affliction

The imperative **see** is singular because Job is addressing God, not his three friends. So use the second-person singular in your translation if your language marks that distinction. It may also be helpful to specify the addressee. Alternate translation: “Yes, God, see my affliction” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

Yes, see

Job is using the term **see** to mean “consider” by association with the way people consider things that they are looking at. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Yes, consider” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 10:16

And should it arise

The pronoun **it** refers to Job's head, which in the previous verse he said he would not lift. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "And should my head arise" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p. 1267)**)

And should it arise

Job is speaking of his **head** as if it were a living thing that could **arise** on its own. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And should I raise my head" or "And if I did raise my head" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

you would stalk me like a lion

The point of this comparison is that just as a **lion** stalks its prey relentlessly, so, Job is saying, God would stalk him relentlessly. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "you would stalk me as relentlessly as a lion stalks its prey" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and you would return, you would distinguish yourself against me

In this expression, the word **return** means to do something again. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and once again you would distinguish yourself against me" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and you would return, you would distinguish yourself against me

Job means implicitly that God would **distinguish** himself by punishing Job in spectacular ways. ([Exodus 3:20](#) uses the same verb to describe the plagues that God sent against the Egyptians.) You could indicate this meaning in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and you would do further great things to punish me" or "you would punish me further in spectacular ways" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 10:17

You would renew your witnesses against me

In this verse, Job continues to describe what he believes God would do if he were to “lift” his “head” (that is, if he were to act as if he had nothing to be ashamed of), as he said in [10:15](#). Job could be using the word **witnesses** here to mean: (1) accusations that God would make against Job, as if God were literally a witness testifying against Job in a trial. Alternate translation: “You would accuse me of doing further wrong things” (2) sufferings that God would cause Job to experience, since people in this culture believed that sufferings were evidence that God was punishing someone for doing wrong. Alternate translation: “You would cause me to suffer even more” (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

changes and an army {are} with me

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. Job is using the word **changes** to indicate that he feels that God is sending one **army** after another against him. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “you keep sending new armies against me” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

changes and an army {are} with me

Job is speaking as if God is literally sending one **army** after another against him. He means that he feels that God keeps attacking him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you keep attacking me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 10:18

So why did you bring me out from the womb

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should not have brought me out of the womb!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

So why did you bring me out from the womb

Job is speaking of God bringing him **out from the womb** by association to describe his birth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Why did you allow me to be born?" or "You should not have allowed me to be born!" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Would that I had expired

See how you translated the similar expression in [3:11](#). Alternate translation: "If only I had passed away" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

and an eye had not seen me

Job is using one part of a person, the **eye**, to mean all of a person in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and no one had ever seen me" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 10:19

Would that I had been brought from the womb to the grave

Job is using the term **womb** by association to mean birth, and he is using the term **grave** by association to mean death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I wish that I had died as soon as I was born" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Would that I had been brought

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I wish that someone had brought me" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1136)**)

Job 10:20

Are} my days not few

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "My days are so few!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

So cease and put from me

The expressions **cease** and **put from me** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "So stop me making me suffer" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

and put from me

Interpreters are not certain what this phrase means. It is possible that Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and put these sufferings away from me" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and let me smile a little

Job is not asking God to **let** him **smile a little**; rather, Job is saying what he would do if God stopped making him suffer. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and then I would be able to smile a little" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and let me smile a little

Job is using the term **smile** to mean being happy or comforted, by association with the way that people who are happy or comforted smile. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and let me experience a little comfort" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and let me smile a little

In this verse, the term **little** translates the same word that the term **few** translates. Your language may allow you to show this in your translation. Alternate translation: "and let me smile for a few moments" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 10:21

to the land of darkness and deep darkness

The terms **darkness** and **deep shadow** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “to the land of great darkness” or “to the place where it is very dark” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

to the land of darkness and deep darkness

Job is using the terms **darkness** and **deep darkness** to mean by association the abode of the dead, which people in this culture believed to be a very dark place, since it was away from any sunlight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to the abode of the dead” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 10:22

and it shines like gloom

The pronoun **it** could refer to: (1) whatever faint light there might be in the abode of the dead. Alternate translation: “and where the light shines like gloom” or “and where the only light is very faint” (2) the **land** that Job has been describing, that is, the abode of the dead itself. In order to draw a contrast with the darkness in the abode of the dead, Job would be speaking as if a place that is well-lit **shines**. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “There is no light in that land” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p. 1267)**)

and it shines like gloom

If you decided to translate verses 2–22 as a second-level direct quotation, indicate the end of that quotation here at the end of this sentence with a closing second-level quotation mark or whatever other punctuation or convention your language uses to indicate the end of a second-level quotation. (See: **Quote Markings (p.1274)**)

Job 11

Job 11 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

In this chapter, Job's friend Zophar responds to what Job said in chapters 9 and 10.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Zophar answering Job with his own words

- In [9:12](#), Job asked about God, when suggesting that God might act cruelly, "Who will turn him back?" Zophar says in his response in [11:10](#), answering Job in his own words to insist that God actually acts justly, "Who will turn him back?"
- In [10:15](#), Job says that he will not lift his head, he will continue to act ashamed, because God is punishing him even though he is innocent. Zophar says in response in [11:15](#) that if Job repents and prays for forgiveness, he will be able to lift up his face without any shame.
- In [10:22](#), Job says that he will die and go to a place of complete darkness. Zophar says in response in [11:17](#) that Job's life may seem like darkness now, but it will become bright and happy if he turns to God.

To help your readers appreciate how Zophar is answering Job with his own words, you may wish to translate Zophar's expressions in these places in the same way that you translated Job's similar expressions earlier. Notes will suggest ways to do this.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Rhetorical questions

In many places in this chapter, Zophar uses the question form in order to challenge Job. Your language might not use the question form for that purpose. Notes will suggest other ways to translate these questions. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 11:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 11:2

The multitude of words, will it not be answered? Or if a man of lips will be justified

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Will no one answer the multitude of words? Or will anyone justify a man of lips?" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

The multitude of words, will it not be answered? Or if a man of lips will be justified

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "The multitude of words must be answered! A man of lips will not be justified!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

The multitude of words, will it not be answered

Zophar is using the term **words** by association to mean what Job has just said by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I must respond to the many things that you have just said" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Or if a man of lips will be justified

Zophar is using the word **if** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "A man of lips will not be justified, will he" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Or if a man of lips will be justified

Zophar is using the term **lips** by association to mean talking, since people use their lips when they talk. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Or is a man justified because he talks so much about being righteous" or "A man will not be justified because he talks so much about being righteous, will he" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Or if a man of lips will be justified

In this speech, Zophar is responding to Job, and he will address him directly as "you" in the rest of the speech. But here at the start he is speaking about Job in the third person, even though he is actually speaking to Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "Or will you be justified by talking so much about being righteous" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Job 11:3

Will your boastings make people silent? Or will you mock and no one {is} shaming

Zophar is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Your boastings should not make people silent! Someone should shame you for mocking!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Or will you mock

Zophar means implicitly that Job has been mocking God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Or will you mock God" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 11:4

For you have said, 'My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in your eyes

Zophar means implicitly that Job has said these things to God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "For you have said to God, 'My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in your eyes.'" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

For you have said, 'My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in your eyes

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "For you have told God that your doctrine is pure and that you are clean in his eyes" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

My doctrine is pure, and I am clean

Zophar says that Job has spoken as if his **doctrine** were literally **pure** and his conduct was literally **clean**, that is, not physically dirty. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My doctrine is correct, and I am righteous" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

in your eyes

Zophar is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. Sight, in turn, represents attention, perspective, and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "in your perspective" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 11:5

But who will give God to speak and open his lips against you

The question **who will give** introduces a wish. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this question as a statement or exclamation expressing a wish, beginning here and continuing into the start of the next verse. Alternate translation: "I wish that God would speak and open his lips against you" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

But who will give God to speak and open his lips against you

The expressions **speak** and **open his lips** mean similar things. Zophar is using the two expressions together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "I dearly wish that God would tell you that you are wrong" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

and open his lips

Zophar is using the first part of the talking process, opening one's **lips**, to mean the entire process of talking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and talk" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 11:6

and declare to you the secrets of wisdom

If you translated the beginning of this sentence in the previous verse as a statement or exclamation, translate the end of the sentence here in the same way. Alternate translation: “and declare to you the secrets of wisdom!” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

For {it is} double to understanding

By **it**, Zophar implicitly means God’s wisdom, and by **understanding**, he means Job’s understanding. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “God’s wisdom is double to your understanding” or “God’s wisdom is twice as great as your understanding” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

For {it is} double to understanding

By the expression **double**, Zophar actually means much greater. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God’s wisdom is far greater than your understanding” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

God is forgetting for you {some} of your iniquity

Zophar is speaking as if God were literally **forgetting** some of Job’s **iniquity**. He means that God is overlooking some of the sins that Job has committed and so not punishing him for all of them. Zophar is not suggesting that there are limits to God’s knowledge or memory. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God is overlooking some of your iniquity” or “God is not punishing you for all of your sins” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 11:7

Will you find God by searching

Zophar is using the word **find** to mean “understand” and the word “searching” to mean contemplation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Will you understand God through contemplation” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Will you find God by searching

Zophar is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “You will not find God by searching!” or “You cannot understand God through contemplation!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If unto perfection you will find the Almighty

Zophar is using the word **if** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. (And once again he is using the word **find** to mean “understand.”) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “You will never understand the Almighty unto perfection, will you” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If unto perfection you will find the Almighty

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **perfection**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “You will never understand the Almighty perfectly, will you” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

If unto perfection you will find the Almighty

Zophar is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “You will never understand the Almighty perfectly!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 11:8

The height of the heavens! What will you do? Deeper than Sheol! What will you know

Zophar is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "The height of God's wisdom is the same as the height of the heavens! What will you do to understand it? The depth of God's wisdom is deeper than Sheol! What will you know about it?" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

The height of the heavens! What will you do? Deeper than Sheol! What will you know

Zophar is using the highest and lowest points of creation, **the heavens** and **Sheol**, to mean them and everything in between, that is, all of creation. This could mean: (1) that God's wisdom is completely comprehensive, as if it were literally very high and very deep. Alternate translation: "God's wisdom is completely comprehensive! What will you do? What will you know?" (2) that God's wisdom comprehends everything in creation. Alternate translation: "God's wisdom comprehends all of creation! What will you do? What will you know?" (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

What will you do? & What will you know

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You cannot do anything to understand God's wisdom! ... You cannot know very much about it!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Job 11:9

Its measure {is} longer than the earth and wider than the sea

Zophar is using the two main components of creation below the heavens and above Sheol, the **earth** and the **sea**, to mean all of creation. This could mean: (1) that God's wisdom is completely comprehensive, as if it were literally very long and very wide. Alternate translation: "Yes, God's wisdom is completely comprehensive" (2) that God's wisdom comprehends everything in creation. Alternate translation: "Yes, God's wisdom comprehends all of creation" (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

Job 11:10

he comes

The pronoun **he** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God comes” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and imprisons and assembles

Zophar is referring implicitly to God assembling a group to hear his accusations against someone and pass judgment on that person. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and imprisons someone and calls an assembly to judge that person” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

then who will turn him back

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “then no one can turn him back..” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

then who will turn him back

See how you translated this phrase in [9:12](#). Zophar is using Job’s own words against him, so it may be helpful to your readers to translate this phrase in the same way here. Alternate translation: “then who can stop him?” or “then no one can stop him!” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

then who will turn him back

In [9:12](#) you may have included the implicit information that Job was saying that no one can stop God by telling him it would be wrong to do something. If so, here you may wish to indicate what Zophar is suggesting in response, that God knows right and wrong so much better than humans that God does not need to listen to humans about what he is doing. Alternate translation: “then who can stop him, since he knows so much better than humans and does not need to listen to them?” or “then no one can stop him, since he knows so much better than humans and does not need to listen to them!” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 11:11

people of worthlessness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **worthlessness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “which people are worthless” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and will he see iniquity and not notice it

Zophar is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “and he will surely notice iniquity when he sees it.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

notice it

The term **notice** implicitly means that God will do more than just take note of **iniquity**. It indicates that God will punish people for committing **iniquity**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “punish people for it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 11:12

But an empty man will get a heart and the colt of a wild donkey will be born to a man

For emphasis, Zophar is saying the opposite of what he means. The **colt of a wild donkey** will never be **born to a man**, and so, Zophar means, an **empty man** will never **get a heart**, that is, become wise. If a speaker of your language would not say the opposite of what he means for emphasis, in your translation you could indicate what Zophar actually means. Alternate translation: "But an empty man will never get a heart, any more than the colt of a wild donkey would ever be born to a man" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

But an empty man

Zophar is speaking as if a **man** could literally be **empty** or hollow inside. He means that such a person lacks wisdom. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "But an empty-headed man" or "But a man who lacks wisdom" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

will get a heart

Here the **heart** represents a person's thoughts, so that to **get a heart** means to become wise. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "will become wise" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and the colt of a wild donkey will be born to a man

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "and a man will be the father of a wild-donkey colt" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 11:13

If you prepare your heart

For emphasis, Zophar is stating the pronoun **you**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **prepare**. Zophar is drawing a contrast between what he is suggesting here that Job might do and what the “empty man” he described in the previous verse would not be able to do. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “But as for you, if you prepare your heart” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

If you prepare your heart

In this instance, the **heart** represents a person’s will. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “If you resolve to trust God” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and stretch out your hands to him

Zophar is suggesting that Job might **stretch out** his **hands** to God as symbolic action in order to assume a posture of prayer. You may be able to describe your own culture’s posture of prayer in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “and bow your head to him” or “and pray to him” (See: **Symbolic Action (p. 1292)**)

Job 11:14

if iniquity {is} in your hand, put it far away

Zophar is speaking as if **iniquity** were literally an object that Job could be holding in his **hand** and that Job could **put it far away**. Zophar means that Job might be committing iniquity and that if he has, he should stop. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “if you have been committing iniquity, stop doing that” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and do not let unrighteousness dwell in your tents

Zophar is speaking of **unrighteousness** as if it were a living thing that could **dwell** in the same **tents** in which Job and his household are living. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. The word **tents** could be: (1) an image for Job’s whole life. Alternate translation: “yes, be sure that you are not practicing any unrighteousness” (2) a reference to Job’s household. Alternate translation: “and be sure that no one in your household is practicing any unrighteousness” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and do not let unrighteousness dwell in your tents

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **unrighteousness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “yes, be sure that you are not doing anything that is not righteous” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 11:15

you will lift your face without blemish

Zophar is suggesting that Job would be able to **lift** his **face** without being concerned that any **blemish** would show as symbolic action to indicate that he was not ashamed of anything. Job said in [10:15](#) that he could not do this, and so Zophar is answering Job with his own words. To help your readers appreciate what Zophar is doing, you could translate this expression similarly to the way you translated the comparable expression in [10:15](#). Alternate translation: “you will no longer need to look down in shame” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

without blemish

Zophar is speaking as if Job might literally have a **blemish** on his face and that it would go away if Job prayed to God. The blemish actually represents a cause for shame. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “without feeling any shame” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and you will be established

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who will do the action, the context suggests that it will be God. Alternate translation: “and God will establish you” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and you will not fear

Zophar seems to mean implicitly that Job will not have to **fear** any further punishment from God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and you will not be afraid that God will punish you anymore” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 11:16

as waters pass by, you will remember {it

The point of this comparison is that just as **waters pass by** (flowing down a river, for example) and are gone, so Job's **trouble** will be gone and he will not **remember** it at all. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "you will not remember it at all, just as the water in a river flows by and is never seen again" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 11:17

And life will arise more than noon

Zophar is using the term **noon** by association to mean the sun at noon, that is, the sun when it is highest and brightest in the sky. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And life will arise higher than the noonday sun" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

And life will arise more than noon

Zophar is speaking of Job's **life** as if it were literally an object like the sun that could **arise** into the sky. By saying that Job's life will rise into the sky even higher than the sun at noon, he means that it will be very bright. The brightness, in turn, represents happy thriving. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And your life will become very happy again, as if it were brighter than the noonday sun" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

darkness will become like dawn

In a poetic parallel, Zophar is once again using light, in this instance the light of **dawn**, to represent happiness. This contrasts with Job's present misery, which Zophar represents as **darkness**. Zophar is once again answering Job with his own words. The term translated **darkness** here is from the same root as the term that the ULT translates as "obscurity" in 10:22. To help your readers appreciate what Zophar is doing, you could translate the term here the same way you translated it there. Alternate translation: "the misery of your life may feel like obscurity now, but it will change into happiness, just as dawn changes darkness into light" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 11:18

and you will look around

Zophar means implicitly that Job will **look around** and see that there is no danger. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and you will look around and see that there is no danger” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

you will lie down in safety

Zophar is referring implicitly to when Job would **lie down** to sleep at night. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Your language may have its own expression that you could use here in your translation. Alternate translation: “you will lie down to sleep in safety” or “you will go to bed in safety” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

you will lie down in safety

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **safety**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “you will lie down safely” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 11:19

Yes, you will recline

Zophar once again means implicitly that Job would **recline** to sleep at night. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Yes, you will lie down to sleep for the night” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and many will stroke your face

Zophar is speaking as if **many** people would literally **stroke** Job’s **face**, as someone would do who was trying to make someone else favorable to him. Zophar means that Job would become influential again and people would seek his favor. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “many people will seek your favor” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 11:20

But the eyes of the wicked will fail

Zophar is referring to death by association with the way people's eyes **fail** when they are about to die (either in the sense of becoming visibly dim or in the sense of no longer seeing well). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "But the wicked will die" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and escape will perish from them

Zophar is speaking of **escape** as if it were a living thing that could **perish**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "yes, they will not be able to escape dying" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and their hope {will be} an expiration of breath

Zophar is using the phrase **expiration of breath**, which means "breathing out," to mean dying. This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "they will have no hope other than to pass away" or "they will have no hope other than to die" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

Job 12

Job 12 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the start of Job's response to Zophar's first speech. (Job's response to him continues in chapters 13 and 14.) - Verses 1–6: Job speaks to all three of his friends and protests that they have not been telling him anything that he does not already know - Verses 7–12: Job speaks specifically to Zophar and insists that what Zophar has just said in his speech is common knowledge in the world and something that he himself knows. - Verses 13–25: Job describes how God is so powerful that no one can resist what he does.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Plural and singular “you”

The pronoun “you” is plural in verses 1–3 because Job is addressing all three of his friends. The pronoun “you” is singular in verses 7–8 because Job is addressing Zophar. Use the plural and singular forms in these places if your language marks that distinction.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Litany

In verses 13–24, Job makes a series of statements about how powerful God is. These specific statements illustrate the general statement that Job makes in verse 4 that God is “wise in heart and mighty in strength.” A series of statements such as this is known as a litany. If your readers would recognize what Job is doing, you can translate and format this litany the way the ULT does. If the litany form would not be familiar to your readers, you could format the general statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that shows the overall meaning of what Job is saying. You could then put each sentence of the litany on a separate line. The format might look something like this:

With him {are} wisdom and might; to him {are} counsel and understanding. Behold, he breaks down, and it is not rebuilt; he closes upon a man, and it is not opened. Behold, he withholds the waters and they dry up, and he sends them out and they overthrow the land. With him {are} strength and prudence; to him {are} the one straying and the one causing to stray; the one leading counselors away naked, and he makes judges foolish. He removes the bond of kings and he wraps a cloth around their loins; the one leading priests away naked, and the incumbent ones he overthrows, the one removing the lip {that is} to the ones being trusted, and he takes away the discernment of the elders, the one pouring contempt on nobles, and the belt of the mighty ones he loosens, the one revealing deep things out of darkness, and he brings dark shadow into the light, the one magnifying nations, and he destroys them; the one enlarging nations, and he exiles them, the one removing a heart from the leaders of the people of the earth; he causes them to wander in a wasteland {with} no path. They grope in darkness and not in light; he makes them wander like a drunkard.

Job 12:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 12:2

Truly, then, you {are} the people, and wisdom will die with you

For emphasis, Job is saying the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what Job actually means. Alternate translation: “You are speaking as if you were the people and as if wisdom would with you, but that is not true” (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

you {are} the people

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the word **you** is plural here and in the next two verses because Job is referring to his three friends. So use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Other languages may have other ways to indicate the plural reference. Alternate translation: “the three of you are the people” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

you {are} the people

Job could be saying (while meaning the opposite): (1) that his three friends are so wise that their opinion is the one that really matters. Alternate translation: “you are the people whose opinion matters” (2) that in their counsel, his three friends are embodying the collective wisdom of their people. Alternate translation: “you have expressed the wisdom of our whole people” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and wisdom will die with you

Job is speaking of **wisdom** as if it were a living thing that could **die**. He is saying (while meaning the opposite) that his friends are the only people who are truly wise and so there will be no wisdom left on earth once they die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and indeed, you are the only wise people on earth” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 12:3

A heart {is} also to me, like you

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts, and in this context, specifically wise thoughts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have wisdom just as you do" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

I {am} not falling below you

Job is using this expression to mean that he is not inferior to his friends. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I do not fall short of you" or "I am not inferior to you" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

And with whom {are} not such {things} as these

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Indeed, such things as these are with everyone." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

And with whom {are} not such {things} as these

Job is using this expression to mean that everyone knows the things that his friends have been saying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And everyone knows such things as these" or "And everyone knows the things that you have been saying" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 12:4

I, the one calling on God and he answered him, have become laughter to his neighbor

Job is actually using the pronouns **him** and **his** to refer to himself. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this using first-person pronouns. Alternate translation: “Even though God used to answer me when I called on him, now I have become laughter to my neighbor” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

laughter

Job is using the term **laughter** by association to mean an object of laughter, that is, of derision. Your language may have an expression that you could use in your translation to convey this meaning. Alternate translation: “a laughingstock” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

just, blameless—laughter

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “I, a just and blameless man, have become a laughingstock!” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 12:5

the secure

Job is using the adjective **secure** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “people who are secure” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

prepared for the ones slipping of foot

Job is speaking of certain people as if their **foot** was literally **slipping** and they were about to fall down. Job is likely describing people who are struggling with difficulties, and he is saying that people who are **secure** believe that they are struggling because God is punishing them for their sins. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “They believe that when people struggle in life, that is because God is punishing them for their sins” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

prepared

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “They think that it is prepared” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

prepared

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “They think that God has prepared it” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 12:6

The tents of robbers prosper

Job is speaking of the **tents** of these **robbers** as if they were living things that could **prosper**. By referring to one valuable possession of the robbers, Job means that the robbers themselves prosper. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Robbers live in prosperity" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and securities {are

Job is using the plural form **securities** to indicate that these **provokers of God** experience security to a supreme extent. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: "and complete security is" (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

to {the one} who carries God in his hand

Here, **hand** represents the power and control that a person has over something. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "to the person who thinks that he has God in his pocket" or "to the person who thinks he has more control over his life than God does" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 12:7

In 11:9, Zophar used the two main components of creation, the earth and the sea, to mean all of creation. Here in 12:7–8, Job is responding to Zophar in his own words. Job's language is more extensive, and so it is more emphatic. Job is using the inhabitants of three components of creation (the beasts of the land, the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea), along with the earth itself, to mean all of creation. To show this, you could create a verse bridge for verses 7–8. It might say something like this: "You can go anywhere in creation and ask a creature—even ask the earth itself—about God's ways, and that creature will be able to explain them to you" (See: **Verse Bridges (p.1301)**)

But now ask the beasts, and one will teach you, the birds of the heavens, and one will declare to you

Job is using an imperative sentence to tell the condition under which something would happen. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate this as a conditional sentence. Alternate translation: "But now if you asked the beasts, one of them would teach you, and if you asked the birds of the heavens, one of them would declare to you" (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.1210)**)

But now ask the beasts, and one will teach you, the birds of the heavens, and one will declare to you

Job is speaking as if Zophar could literally have a conversation with **beasts** and **birds**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If you actually could ask the beasts, one of them would teach you, and if you actually could ask the birds of the heavens, one of them would declare to you" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

But now ask

The pronoun **you** and the implied "you" in the imperative verb (**ask**) are singular here and in the next verse because Job is speaking directly to one of his friends. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Job is probably addressing Zophar, since he said in 11:8–9 that Job could search through all of creation and still not comprehend the wisdom of God. Job is saying in response that God's ways are common knowledge to animals and birds. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that in your translation. Alternate translation: "But now, Zophar, ask" (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

and one will teach you, & and one will declare to you

Job means implicitly that the **beasts** and **birds** would **teach** and **declare** God's ways. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and one of them will teach you God's ways ... and one of them will declare God's ways to you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the birds of the heavens

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "ask the birds of the heavens" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 12:8**Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, and the fish of the sea will recount to you**

Job is using an imperative sentence to tell the condition under which something would happen. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate this as a conditional sentence. Alternate translation: “Or if you spoke to the earth, then it would teach you; the fish of the sea would recount to you” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p. 1210)**)

Or speak to the earth, and it will teach you, and the fish of the sea will recount to you

Job is continuing to speak as if Zophar could literally have a conversation with the **earth** and with **fish**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “If you could actually speak to the earth, it would teach you. If you could have a conversation with the fish of the sea, they would recount to you” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and it will teach you, and the fish of the sea will recount to you

Once again Job means implicitly that the **earth** and the **fish** would **teach** and **recount** God’s ways. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and it will teach you God’s ways; the fish of the sea will recount God’s ways to you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the fish of the sea will recount to you

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “or ask the fish of the sea, and they will recount to you” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 12:9

Which of all these does not know that the hand of Yahweh has done this

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "All of these know that the hand of Yahweh has done this!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Which of all these does not know

Job is speaking of the creatures he described in the previous two verses as if they could **know** what Yahweh has done. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Which of all these creatures could not tell you, if you could actually have a conversation with them," (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the hand of Yahweh has done this

Here, **hand** represents the power and control that someone has over something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Yahweh has done this by his own power" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

has done this

In context, the word **this** likely refers to the misfortune that Job is suffering. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "has caused my misfortune" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 12:10

in whose hand {is

Here, **hand** represents the power and control that someone has over something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “He has power over” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and the breath of all flesh of man

In this instance, Job is using the word **and** to emphasize something that is included in the previous phrase, not to introduce something additional. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation, preceded by a comma: “including the breath of all flesh of man” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and the breath of all flesh of man

Job is using the term **breath** by association to mean “life.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the life of all flesh of man” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and the breath of all flesh of man

Job is using one part of **man**, his **flesh**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the life of every man” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and the breath of all flesh of man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “and the life of every woman and man” or “and the life of every person” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 12:11

Does not the ear test words and the palate taste the food {that is} to it

In this instance, Job is using the word **and** to say that the phrase it introduces is just as true as the previous phrase. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "Does not the ear test words, just as the palate tastes its food?" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

Does not the ear test words and the palate taste the food {that is} to it

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Certainly the ear tests words just as the palate tastes its food!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Does not the ear test words and the palate taste the food {that is} to it

Job is speaking of the **ear** as if it could **test words** by itself. He is using the ear to represent hearing, and he means that people themselves test or consider the words of others when they hear them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Do people not consider others' words when they hear them, just as people discern with their mouths the taste of their food" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

words

Job is using the term **words** to mean what people say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what people say" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Does not the ear test words and the palate taste the food {that is} to it

Though Job is making a general statement, he is referring implicitly to what his friends have said to him and what he has decided about it. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I have heard what you have said and I have considered it and decided that it is not true, just as people discern with their mouths the taste of their food" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the palate taste the food {that is} to it

Job is speaking of the **palate** or mouth as if it could **taste** by itself. He means that with their mouths, people discern the taste of the food that they eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "just as people discern with their mouths the taste of their food" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 12:12

With the aged {is} wisdom, and in length of days {is} understanding

Though Job is making another general statement in this verse, he is referring implicitly to himself as someone who has acquired much wisdom through long experience. The further implication is that although Zophar challenged him in 11:8 by asking, “What will you know?” Job is insisting here that he actually does know a lot about life. You could indicate these things in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “I have lived a long time and I have acquired much wisdom through experience, so I actually do know a lot about life” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

With the aged {is} wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wisdom**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “The aged are wise” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

With the aged

Job is using the adjective **aged** as a noun to mean people of a certain kind. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “With aged people” or “With older people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and in length of days {is} understanding

The expression **length of days** means a long life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, people who have lived a long life have understanding” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 12:13

With him {are} wisdom and might; to him {are} counsel and understanding

The pronoun **him** refers in each instance to God. Job is no longer referring to an “aged” person, as in the previous verse. Instead, he is describing what he knows about God as someone who has lived a long time and acquired much wisdom. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “I know that God has wisdom and might; I know that God has counsel and understanding” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

With him {are} wisdom and might; to him {are} counsel and understanding

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **wisdom, might, counsel, and understanding**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: “God is wise and mighty; he understands everything and knows what to do” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

With him {are} wisdom and might; to him {are} counsel and understanding

As the following verses make clear, Job is saying implicitly that these qualities belong to God alone and that God does not share them with humans. In that sense, while it sounds as if Job is praising God, at the same time, Job is also complaining somewhat about God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “God has so much knowledge and power that no human can resist him; God does not explain to anyone how he understands a situation or what he is going to do about it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 12:14

he breaks down and it is not rebuilt; he closes upon a man and it is not opened

In both of these instances, Job is using the word **and** to introduce what happens under the condition he is describing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “if he breaks down, then it is not rebuilt; if he closes upon a man, then it is not opened” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and it is not rebuilt; & and it is not opened

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and no one rebuilds ... and no one opens” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

he closes upon a man and it is not opened

In this context, the expressions **closes upon** and **opened** refer to imprisonment and release. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he imprisons a man, and that man is not released” or “if he imprisons a man, then no one releases that man” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “a man or woman” or “a person” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 12:15

Behold, he withholds the waters and they dry up, and he sends them out and they overthrow the land

In both of these instances, Job is using the word **and** to introduce what happens under the condition he is describing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “if he withholds the waters, then they dry up; if he sends them out, then they overthrow the land” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and they overthrow the land

Job is speaking as if the **waters** would literally **overthrow** the **land** or turn it upside down. He means that the waters would completely cover the land so that there would be no land any more. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and they completely flood the land” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 12:16

With him {are} strength and prudence

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **strength** and **prudence**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: "God is strong and prudent" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the one straying and the one causing to stray

Job is speaking of people who are not living in the right way as if they were **straying** or going off the path that they should be walking on. He is speaking of people who persuade others to do wrong things as if they were **causing** them to **stray**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "those who do not live right and those who persuade others not to live right" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to him {are} the one straying and the one causing to stray

The implication is that if someone is **straying** or doing wrong, that person cannot excuse his actions by saying that someone else persuaded him to do them. The person who chose to do wrong is accountable to God, and anyone who persuaded him to do those wrong is also accountable to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state this plainly. Alternate translation: "those who do wrong and those who persuade them to do wrong are both accountable to God" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

to him {are} the one straying and the one causing to stray

Job is using two complementary types of people to mean all people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: "everyone is accountable to God for what they do and for what they persuade others to do" (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

Job 12:17

He is} the one leading counselors away naked

The pronoun **one** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "God leads counselors away naked" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

He is} the one leading counselors away naked

To lead someone away **naked**, as victorious armies did to prisoners of war at this time, was a symbolic action that demonstrated that the conqueror had deprived the captive of his former status in his culture. In the case of a royal **counselor**, his power and authority were previously represented by his robe of office. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "God takes away from counselors the robes that represent the authority and power of their office" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

He is} the one leading counselors away naked

Job is speaking as if God literally leads **counselors** away **naked**. He means that God's wisdom is so great that it discredits the wisdom of even the wisest humans, as if to put them out of office. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God's wisdom is so great that it discredits the wisdom of even the wisest humans" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and judges he makes foolish

The implication is probably that God makes **judges** seem **foolish** by being so much wiser than they are, and not that God affects the minds of judges so that they can no longer think intelligently. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and God makes judges seem foolish by being so much wiser than they are" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 12:18

He removes the bond of kings

This could mean implicitly: (1) that **kings** might put a **bond** (that is, shackles) on someone to make him a prisoner, but God can set that person free. Alternate translation: "A king may imprison someone, but God can set that person free" (2) that kings may be wearing some symbol of royal authority as a **bond** (that is, as something bound around their bodies), such as a sash or chain, but God takes away their authority and removes this symbol of it. This meaning would be similar to what Job said in the previous verse about God removing counselors' robes of authority. Alternate translation: "God strips kings of their royal sashes" or "God removes the chains of royal authority that kings are wearing" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

He removes the bond of kings

Whether this refers to God removing shackles from people whom kings have imprisoned or God removing symbols of royal authority that kings are wearing, it is a symbolic action that demonstrates that God is taking away kings' authority. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "He takes away kings' authority" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

and he wraps a cloth around their loins

To wrap a **cloth** around someone's **loins** is to make them dress as a slave would. This is a symbolic action that shows that the person has become a slave. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "and he turns them into slaves" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 12:19

the one leading priests away naked

See how you translated the similar expression in [12:17](#). Alternate translation: “God takes away from priests the robes that represent the authority and power of their office” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

and the incumbent ones

Job is using the adjective **incumbent** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. The term is plural; the ULT shows this by adding the word **ones**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “and people who are long established in their positions” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 12:20

the one removing the lip {that is} to the ones being trusted

Job is using the term **lip** by association to mean speech. He is using speech, in turn, to mean what these **trusted** people say, that is, the advice that they give. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "God discredits the advice of the ones being trusted" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the one removing the lip {that is} to the ones being trusted

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God discredits the advice of the people in whom kings trust" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 12:21

the one pouring contempt on nobles

For emphasis, Job is speaking as if **contempt** were a liquid that God could literally pour on **nobles**. He means that God makes these princes lose the respect of others and experience complete contempt from them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in another way. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "God completely disgraces nobles" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and the belt of the mighty ones he loosens

Job is speaking as if God literally **loosens** the **belt** of **mighty ones**, that is, as if these mighty people tie up their robes so that they can do strenuous things, but God loosens their robes again so that they can not do those things. Job means that God is so strong that when he acts, even the strongest people are shown to be weak by comparison. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and God is so strong that when he acts, even the strongest people are shown to be weak by comparison" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the mighty ones

Job is using the adjective **mighty** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. The term is plural; the ULT shows this by adding the word **ones**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "people who are mighty" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 12:22

the one revealing deep things out of darkness, and he brings dark shadow into the light

Job is speaking as if God were literally bringing things that were shrouded in **darkness** into the **light** where they could be seen. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "God reveals deep things that are obscure to humans; yes, he helps people understand things that are unclear" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the one revealing deep things out of darkness

Job is speaking as if things that are difficult to understand are literally **deep**, that is, far underground where people cannot see them or reach them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the one revealing the truth about things that are difficult to understand" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

deep things

Job is using the adjective **deep** as a noun to mean a certain kind of thing. The term is plural; the ULT shows this by adding the word **things**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "things that are profound" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 12:23

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 12:24

a heart

Here, the **heart** represents the thoughts. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “understanding” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he causes them to wander in a wasteland {with} no path

Job is speaking as if God literally makes leaders **wander in a wasteland**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he makes them confused so that they do not know the right thing to do” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 12:25

They grope in darkness and not in light

Job is speaking as if these leaders whose understanding God takes away literally **grope in darkness**, as if there were no **light** by which they could see where to go. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They are not able to understand what they should do" (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

he makes them wander like a drunkard

The point of this comparison is that just as a **drunkard** will wander in various directions without knowing where he is going, so these leaders will do one thing after another without being able to make a definite, correct plan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "he makes them act aimlessly, just as a drunkard wanders aimlessly" (See: **Simile (p. 1287)**)

Job 13

Job 13 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Zophar's first speech. - Verses 1–19: Job complains to his friends that they have been speaking about him unfairly - Verses 20–28: Job begins to plead his case to God. He asks God to stop punishing him and to reveal any sins that are causing God to punish him with such great suffering.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

singular and plural “you”

The words “you” and “your” and the implied “you” in imperative verbs are all plural in verses 1–19 because in those verses Job is addressing his three friends. These forms are singular in verses 20–28 because Job is addressing God. If your language marks a distinction between singular and plural “you,” use the appropriate forms in these different parts of the chapter.

“lift his face” (verse 8), “hide your face” (verse 24)

These expressions reflect a cultural practice. In this culture, the subject of a king would look humbly down at the ground when he came into the king's presence. If the king was pleased with him, the king would “lift his face,” that is, get him to look up (for example, with a finger under his chin, or with a verbal command) to indicate that he could look at the king directly. In this way the king would be showing that he favored this subject. A reference to lifting someone's face came to mean showing favoritism towards that person. That is the meaning in verse 8, where Job says that his friends are not considering his case fairly but instead showing partiality towards God. Similarly, if someone “hid his face” from someone (that is, turned his face away so that he was not looking at the person), that would be a sign that he was not pleased with the person. The expression “hide the face” came to mean “show disfavor,” even if someone was not literally looking away from someone else. That is what Job means in verse 24 when he asks God, “Why do you hide your face?” Notes to these verses suggest ways of translating these expressions.

Job 13:1

my eye has seen all; my ear has heard and understood it

Job is using one part of himself, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. He uses another part of himself, his **ear**, to mean all of him in the act of hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I myself have seen all; I myself have heard and understood it" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

all

Job is using the word **all** to mean everything that his friends have told him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "all that the three of you have told me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 13:2

As you know, & below you

The word **you** is plural here and through verse 13 because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

I also know. I {am} not falling

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the words translated **know** and **falling**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis, for example, by using the intensive pronoun "myself." Alternate translation: "I myself also know. I myself am not falling" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

I {am} not falling below you

See how you translated the similar expression in [12:3](#). Alternate translation: "I do not fall short of you" or "I am not inferior to you" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 13:3

I will speak with the Almighty

Job is using this future statement to express a wish. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that in your translation. Alternate translation: "I wish to speak with the Almighty" or "I would rather speak with the Almighty" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

Job 13:4

you {are} plasterers of a lie

Job is speaking as if his friends were literally plastering him with a **lie**, that is, coating him with untruth as if they were plastering a surface with it. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "you are smearing me with lies" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

all of you {are} healers of no value

Job is speaking as if his friends were literally doctors or **healers** who were trying to cure him of a disease but were failing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "none of you have helped me at all by what you have said" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 13:5

Who will give {that} being silent, you will be silent

See how you translated the expression **Who will give** in 11:5-6. Alternate translation: "I wish that being silent, you would be silent!" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

being silent, you will be silent

Job is repeating a verb that means to **be silent** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: "you would be completely silent" (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

And it will be to you for wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wisdom**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "That would be the wisest thing you could do" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 13:6

and heed the pleadings of my lips

Job is using one part of himself, his **lips**, to mean all of him in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and heed the things I am saying as I plead my case" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 13:7

Will you speak unrighteously for God, and will you talk deceitfully for him

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You have been speaking unrighteously for God! You have been talking deceitfully for him!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Job 13:8

Will you lift his face? Or will you plead for God

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You have been lifting his face! You have been pleading for God!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will you lift his face

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the expression **lift his face** means to show favor or favoritism towards someone. Alternate translation: "Will you show him favoritism?" or "You are showing him favoritism!" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

will you plead for God

Job is using the word **plead** to mean "argue a court case." He is suggesting that his friends are not counseling him impartially but, rather, taking God's side against him even though, as he sees it, he has a valid case against God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "will you take God's side against me?" or "you are taking God's side against me!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 13:9

Is it} good that he will examine you? Or will you deceive him as deceiving a man

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "It is not good that he will examine you! You will not deceive him as you might deceive a man" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Is it} good that he will examine you

Job means implicitly that it would not be **good** for his friends if God were to **examine** them because God would discover that they had not been telling the truth about him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "If God were to examine you, he would discover that you have not been telling the truth about him, and that would not be good for you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "a man or a woman" or "a human" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 13:10

Reproving, he would reprove you if in secret you were lifting faces

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “If in secret you were lifting faces, reproving, he would reprove you” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

Reproving, he would reprove

Job is repeating the verb **reprove** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: “He would certainly reprove” (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

you were lifting faces

See how you translated the similar expression in [13:8](#). Alternate translation: “you were showing favoritism” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 13:11

Would} not his majesty terrify you and the dread of him fall on you

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "His majesty would certainly terrify you and the dread of him would certainly fall on you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

and the dread of him fall on you

Job is speaking of **dread** as if it were a living thing that could actively **fall** on his friends, either in the sense of overwhelming them or of assailing them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and would you not become extremely afraid of him" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 13:12

Your maxims {are} proverbs of ashes

Job is speaking as if the **maxims** that his friends have been quoting were literally made of **ashes**. Since, in this culture, garbage was burned into ashes, Job likely means that these **maxims** are worthless, at least as applied to his situation. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “The memorable proverbs you have been quoting are worthless to me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

your defenses are defenses of clay

Job is speaking as if his friends' **defenses** of God were literally made of **clay**. He likely means that, like clay, they are fragile and would shatter if struck. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “your defenses would crumble if anyone challenged you” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 13:13

and let come upon me what {will

Job is speaking as if something might literally **come upon** him when he spoke. He means that something might happen to him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and I will accept the consequences, whatever they may be” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 13:14

Why do I take my flesh in my teeth and put my life in my hands

Job is posing to his friends a question whose answer he already knows. He is doing this to introduce the answer. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Let me tell you why I am taking my flesh in my teeth, yes, putting my life in my hands." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why do I take my flesh in my teeth

Job is speaking as if he were literally taking (that is, carrying) his own **flesh** in his **teeth**. The image seems to be that of an animal carrying in its mouth prey that it has caught and killed. Until the animal is able to bring the prey safely into its den, the prey is vulnerable and there is a risk that another animal will come and take it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Why do I put my flesh at risk" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Why do I take my flesh in my teeth

Job is using one part of himself, his **flesh**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Why am I putting myself at risk" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and put my life in my hands

Job is speaking as if he is literally holding his **life** in his **hands**, where once again it would be vulnerable, as in the preceding image in this verse. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and jeopardize my life" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 13:15

he kills me, I will hope in him

Job is using the statement form to describe a conditional relationship, that is, to say what he would do if God did a specific thing. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “even if he kills me, I will still hope in him” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.1157)**)

my ways

Job is speaking of how he has been living as if he had been walking along certain **ways** or paths. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my conduct” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to his face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: “in his presence” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 13:16

Even this {will be} for salvation to me

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **salvation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "This is what will actually save me" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the godless

Job is using the adjective **godless** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "a godless person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

to his face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "into his presence" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 13:17

Hearing, hear

Job is repeating the verb **hear** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: "Make sure that you hear" (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

and {may} my declaration {be}

Job is using the term **word** to mean what he is about to say to God in his own defense by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and may what I am about to say be" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and {may} my declaration {be} in your ears

Job is using the term **ears** by association to mean hearing or listening. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as a new sentence: "Yes, listen carefully to my declaration" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 13:18

I am righteous

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **am righteous**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: "I am certainly righteous" or "I am certainly innocent" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 13:19

Who {is} he {who} will contend with me

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I do not believe that anyone could contend successfully with me" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

For

Job is using the word **For** to describe what would happen under the condition he has just described. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "If someone does prove me wrong," (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and expire

See how you translated the similar expression in [3:11](#). Alternate translation: "and pass away" (See: **Euphemism (p. 1177)**)

Job 13:20

Only two {things

At this point in his speech, Job stops addressing his three friends and starts addressing God directly. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: “God, only two things do not do to me” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

do not do & from your face

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the word **your** and the implied “you” in the imperative **do** are singular here because Job is starting to address God directly. He continues to speak to God for the rest of this chapter and in all of chapter 14. So use singular forms of second-person pronouns and imperatives in your translation from here to the end of chapter 14 if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

from your face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: “from you presence” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 13:21

Withdraw your hand from upon me

Here, **hand** represents the power of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Stop using your power to make me suffer” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and {with} your fear

Job is using the term **fear** by association to mean something that causes a person to feel fear, the awesome presence of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and with your fearsome presence” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 13:22

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 13:23

How many iniquities and sins {are} to me? Make me know my transgression and my sin

While the terms **iniquities**, **sins**, and **transgression** mean similar things, Job is not necessarily using the three terms together for emphasis. There is a slight distinction between the kinds of activities that these terms describe, and Job may be naming these different activities as specific examples of potential wrongdoing in order to represent all types of wrongdoing. To show this, in your translation you could use three different terms that your language may have for wrongdoing. Alternatively, you could express the general meaning. Either way, you could combine the question and the imperative into a polite request. Alternate translation: "Please tell me what crimes or misdeeds or offenses I may have committed" or "Please tell me if I have done wrong in any way" (See: **Doublet (p. 1172)**)

Job 13:24

Why do you hide your face

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the expression **hide your face** means to show disfavor or hostility to someone. Alternate translation: "Why do you treat me with hostility" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 13:25

Will you terrify a driven leaf? Or will you pursue dry stubble

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You do not need to terrify a driven leaf! You do not need to pursue dry stubble!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will you terrify a driven leaf? Or will you pursue dry stubble

Job is speaking as if he were literally a **driven leaf** and **dry stubble**. By comparing himself to those things, he is indicating that he is fragile and insignificant and that God does not need to oppose him powerfully. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as exclamations: "You do not need to terrify someone who is as fragile as I am! You do not need to pursue someone who is as insignificant as I am!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

a driven leaf

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Job is referring to a leaf that is **driven** by the wind. Alternate translation: "a leaf that the wind is driving" or "a leaf that the wind is blowing about" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 13:26

you write bitter things against me

Job is speaking as if God were literally writing down charges against him. In this culture, that was the way of formally filing legal charges against someone. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you charge me with bitter crimes” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you write bitter things against me

Job is speaking as if the things that God is holding against him were **bitter** or bad-tasting. He means that they are things that would make someone feel unpleasant, just as bitter food or drink does. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you charge me with horrible crimes” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and you make me inherit the iniquities of my youth

Job is speaking as if God is literally giving him an inheritance. He means that God is punishing him for the wrong things that he did in his **youth**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and you punish me for the iniquities of my youth” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and you make me inherit the iniquities of my youth

Job is suggesting implicitly that God should not judge him strictly for things he did in his **youth**, since youths are immature and impulsive and they do wrong things without having the kind of self-control and knowledge that adults should have. The Bible expresses this same perspective in [Psalm 25:7](#). You could indicate this implication in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and you judge me strictly for the immature things I did as a youth, which is not fair” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 13:27

and you put my feet in shackles

Job is speaking as if God literally has put his **feet** in **shackles**. He means that God has restrained his actions severely by punishing him for the slightest infractions. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and you restrain my actions severely by punishing me for the slightest infractions” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and you watch all of my paths

Job is speaking as if his courses of action were literally **paths** that he was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and you watch everything I do” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you engrave around the soles of my feet

Job is speaking as if God were literally taking some action regarding his **feet**. Interpreters are unsure of the exact meaning of this image. Job could be speaking as if: (1) God had drawn lines in the ground to mark foot-shaped areas where Job would have to step. Alternate translation: “you only allow me to step in a few small places” or “you only permit me to do a limited number of things without being punished” (2) God had put some kind of mark on his feet so that he would leave a distinctive footprint that God could easily track. Alternate translation: “you closely watch all of my actions” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 13:28

And he decays

Job is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “and I decay” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

And he decays

Job is using the word **and** to introduce the result of the sufferings he is experiencing, which he considers to be punishments from God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “so that he decays” or “so that I decay” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

Job 14

Job 14 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the conclusion of Job's response to Zophar's first speech. - Verses 1–12: Job says that God should not pay so much attention to humans, since they have short and troubled lives. - Verses 13–17: Job speculates about what it would be like if God could bring him back to life and be friendly towards him again. - Verses 18–22: Job concludes pessimistically that he will likely just die and be separated forever from human community.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Resurrection

Job lived at a time when people did not know for certain whether there would be a resurrection of the dead, so Job speculates about this in his speeches. Sometimes he is more hopeful about it, and at other times he is less hopeful about it. In your translation, reflect what he is feeling and saying. It is not necessary to adjust his words in order to make them a confident proclamation about the resurrection.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

singular and plural "you"

The words "you" and "your" and the implied "you" in imperative verbs are singular throughout this chapter because Job is addressing God. If your language marks a distinction between singular and plural "you," use the singular form in your translation.

"man" in a generic sense

In several places in this chapter, Job uses the word "man" in a generic sense that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. It may be helpful in your translation to say "men and women" or to use a term in your language that is clearly inclusive of both men and women, such as "people," "mortals," or "humans."

Job 14:1

Man, born of woman— few of days and full of trouble

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. However, Job is being deliberately terse in order to describe the human condition as pitiful, so you may wish to translate this statement with fewer words than your language would ordinarily use. Alternate translation: “Man, who is born of woman, is few of days and full of trouble” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Man, born of woman

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “Every child of a human mother” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Man, born of woman

Job is using the phrase **born of woman** by association to mean that people are mortal. In other words, just as they are naturally born, they will naturally die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Mortal man” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Man, born of woman

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, here and throughout the chapter the masculine term “man” has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, in all such instances you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “Mortal humans” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

few of days and full of trouble

Job does not mean that in general people live for only a few **days**. He is using the term **days** to mean time in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “His life is short and it is full of trouble” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and full of trouble

Job is speaking of **Man** as if he were a container that **trouble** fills. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and continually troubled” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 14:2

Like a flower, he comes forth and withers, and like a shadow, he flees and does not stand

These two phrases mean similar things. Job is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. Since Job is using two different images together, it may be helpful to connect the phrases with a word other than **and** in order to show that the second phrase is conveying the same idea as the first one, not saying something additional. Alternate translation: "He comes forth and withers like a flower; yes, he flees like a shadow and does not stand" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

and like a shadow, he flees and does not stand

In this context, the word **stand** means to stay in one place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he flees like a shadow; indeed, he does not remain" (See: **Idiom (p. 1207)**)

Job 14:3

Even on such do you open your eye, and do you bring me into judgment with you

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. It may be helpful to make this two sentences. Alternate translation: "And yet on such you open your eye! You bring me into judgment with you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Even on such do you open your eye

Job is using the phrase **open your eye** by association to mean watching. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Must you really watch such creatures" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

do you open your eye, & do you bring & with you

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the words **you** and **your** are singular here because Job is continuing to address God directly. So use the singular forms of those pronouns in your translation here and throughout this chapter if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

Job 14:4

Who will bring clean from unclean? Not one

For emphasis, Job is posing a question and then answering it himself. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "No one can bring clean from unclean!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Who will bring clean from unclean? Not one

Job is using the adjectives **clean** and **unclean** as nouns, probably to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "Every person is unclean, so no person can bear and raise someone who is clean" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Who will bring clean from unclean? Not one

Job is speaking as if people who are sinful are literally **unclean** or dirty and as if people who are not sinful are literally **clean**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Every person is sinful, so no person can bear and raise someone who is not sinful" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 14:5

his days are determined

The pronoun **his** refers to a person in general, as in verse 2. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “a person’s days are determined” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

his days are determined

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “you have determined his days” or “you determine for how many days each person will live” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the number of his months {is} with you

The expression **is with you** describes something that the person being addressed has the power and authority to decide. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “the number of his months is up to you” or “the number of his months is something that you decide” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 14:6

look away from him, that he may desist

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “so that he may desist, look away from him” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

that he may desist

In the context of this speech by Job, the word **desist** implicitly means to stop being continually concerned that God is watching and will judge and punish the slightest infraction. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “that he may live without continually fearing your punishment” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

until he fulfills his day like a hireling

The point of this comparison is that a **hireling**, that is, someone hired by the day for manual labor, has difficult work, but he knows that it is only for a short time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “until he finishes living his difficult but short life” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

he fulfills his day

Job is speaking of a human being’s brief life as if it were literally only a **day**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he lives out his brief life” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 14:7

there is hope for a tree if it is cut down, that it will sprout again and its stalk will not cease

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hope**, you could express the same idea in another way, such as with the verb "hope." Alternate translation: "people may hope that if a tree is cut down, it will sprout again and it will live" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

it is cut down

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "someone cuts it down" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 14:8

and its stump dies in the ground

Job means implicitly that the stump of the tree he is using as an example begins to die. If the tree had died completely, it could not regenerate, as he describes in the next verse. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and its stump begins to die” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 14:9

from the scent of waters

Job is speaking of the tree he is describing as if it could actually smell the **scent** of **waters**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “as soon as the ground becomes moist,” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and make a branch

Job is not referring to a specific **branch**. He actually means that the stump of the tree will send forth many branches or shoots. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and send forth many shoots” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

like a plant

Job is referring implicitly to a young **plant**, which would grow rapidly. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “as young plants do” or “as if it were a young plant” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 14:10

But a man & a man

In this verse, the two instances of the word **man** translate two different words that have essentially the same meaning. These masculine terms have a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use terms in your language that are clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "but a mortal ... a human being" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

and expires

See how you translated the similar expression in [3:11](#). Alternate translation: "and passes away" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

and where {is} he

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "and he is gone completely" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 14:11

This verse is the beginning of a sentence that Job completes at the start of the next verse. The entire sentence draws a comparison. To show this, you could create a verse bridge for verses 11–12. Within it, this sentence might say something like this: “Just as waters disappear from a lake and a river dwindles and dries up, so a man lies down and does not arise.” (See: **Verse Bridges (p.1301)**)

dwindles and dries up

The terms **dwindles** and **dries up** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “steadily dries up” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 14:12

lies down and does not arise

Job is using the expression **lies down** as a mild way to refer to death, and he is using the expression **arise** to mean “come back to life.” Your language may have similar expressions that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “passes away and does not return to this life” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

they will not awake and they will not be roused from their sleep

Job is speaking of people who are dead as if they were asleep. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they will remain dead; they will not be brought back to life” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they will not awake and they will not be roused from their sleep

The pronoun **their** and both instances of the pronoun **they** refer to people who die. Up to this point in this speech, Job has been talking about people dying by referring to a “man.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use singular pronouns in this sentence for continuity. Alternate translation: “he will not awake, no, he will not be roused from his sleep” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and they will not be roused from their sleep

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and no one will rouse them from their sleep” or “and no one will rouse him from his sleep” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 14:13

Who will give {that} you will conceal me in Sheol, that} you will hide me until the turning of your nose, that} you will set a limit for me and remember me

See how you translated the expression **Who will give** in 11:5-6. Alternate translation (as an exclamation): “I wish that you would conceal me in Sheol, {that} you would hide me until the turning of your nose, {that} you would set a limit for me and remember me!” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

until the turning of your nose

Job is speaking as if God’s **anger** might literally **turn** and go in a different direction. Job actually means that God would stop being angry. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “until you stop being angry with me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

that} you will set a limit for me and remember me

This could mean implicitly: (1) that God would set a **limit** on the time that Job had to spend in Sheol before God would **remember** him (see the explanation of the term “remember” in the next note). Alternate translation: “that you would decide how long I needed to spend in Sheol before you would remember me” (2) that God would choose a particular time sometime in the future when he would **remember** Job. Alternate translation: “that you would choose a particular time when you would remember me” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 1143)**)

and remember me

Job is using the expression **remember** in a particular sense. He is not suggesting that God would forget anything or that there are limits to God’s knowledge or memory. Rather, in contexts such as this, the word “remember” means to be aware that someone needs help and to help that person. (For example, [Genesis 8:1](#) says that at the height of the Great Flood, “God remembered Noah and all the living things and all the livestock that were with him in the ark, and God caused a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided.”) If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and help me” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 14:14

If a man dies, will he live

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Even if a man dies, he might live again!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

All the days of my hardship

Job is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Throughout the time of my hardship" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

All the days of my hardship

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hardship**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "Throughout the time when things are hard for me" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

All the days of my hardship

Since Job said in [7:1](#) that a person experiences "hardship" on earth, in this phrase he is probably referring implicitly to life on earth. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "For as long as I live on this earth" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I will wait until the coming of my change

Since Job suggests at the beginning of this verse that people could live again after they die, and since he describes his present life on earth as **hardship**, the implication seems to be that by **my change**, he means his death, which presumably would lead to a better life. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I will wait patiently to die and then live a better life" or "I will hope expectantly that after I die I will live a better life" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 14:15

You would call, and I would answer you. You would desire the work of your hands

In this verse, Job is describing what would happen under the condition he described in the previous verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, to indicate this you could add a connecting word at the start of this verse. You could also use the conditional tense rather than the future tense if that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Then you would call, and I would answer you. You would desire the work of your hands" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

You would call, and I would answer you

Here Job is using words that are very similar to the ones that he used in [13:22](#) to challenge God to argue his case with him. But now he means that he and God would converse in a friendly way. To help your readers appreciate this use of language, it would be helpful to translate the terms here the same way you translated them in [13:22](#). (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and I would answer you

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **answer**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: "and I would gladly answer you" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the work of your hands

Job is using one part of God, his **hands**, to mean all of him in the act of creating Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the person whom you created" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 14:16

then you would number my steps; you would not watch over my sin

Job is speaking as if God literally will **number** or count the **steps** he is taking. He is speaking of living as if it were walking along a path. Job alludes to what he said in [13:27](#), that God was watching his paths and marking places where he had to step. Job could mean here: (1) that once God was no longer angry with him, God would caringly observe all that he did to ensure that he was all right, but God would no longer be looking to see whether he was doing wrong. Alternate translation: “then you would caringly observe all that I did, but you would no longer be looking to see whether I was doing wrong” (2) that God is currently restricting his activities, but once God was no longer angry with him, God would not watch him so closely. Alternate translation: “now you are restricting my activities to keep me from doing the slightest thing wrong, but then you would no longer watch me so closely” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you would not watch over my sin

Job is using his **sin** to mean all of him in the act of sinning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you would not watch over me to see whether I am doing wrong” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 14:17

My transgression {would be} sealed in a bag

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "You would seal my transgression in a bag" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

My transgression {would be} sealed in a bag

Job is speaking as if God would literally **seal** his **transgression** in a **bag**. He means that God would forgive his transgression and no longer regard it, as if it were hidden from view and inaccessible. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "You would completely forgive my transgression" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and you would plaster over my iniquity

Job is speaking as if God would literally **plaster over** his **iniquity**. Once again he means that God would forgive him and no longer regard his iniquity, as if it were hidden from view. Job is using the same terminology as in [13:4](#), where he said that his friends were plastering him with a lie. There he meant that while he was righteous, his friends were making it appear that he was sinful. Here he means that God would make him appear righteous because God would have forgiven all of his sin. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and you would make me appear righteous" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 14:18

This verse is the beginning of a sentence that Job completes in the next verse. The entire sentence draws a comparison. To show this, you could create a verse bridge for verses 18–19. It might say something like this: “However, just a falling mountain crumbles and a rock moves from its place, just as waters wear down stones and its flooding washes away the dust of the earth, so you destroy the hope of man” (See: **Verse Bridges (p.1301)**)

However

Job is using the word translated **However** to indicate a strong contrast between the possibility of renewed life and reconciliation with God after death, which he was discussing in verses 14–17, and what seems to him to be the actual human condition, which he will describe in the rest of this chapter. In your translation, indicate this strong contrast in a way that is natural in your language. (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

a falling mountain crumbles

Job is speaking as if a mountain might literally be **falling**. He means that the mountain is becoming lower in elevation because it is eroding. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “an eroding mountain crumbles” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and a rock moves from its place

Job is not referring to a specific **rock**. He means rocks in general. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and rocks move from their places” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and a rock moves from its place

The meaning of this phrase may be similar to the meaning of the phrases “his place will not know him again” in [7:10](#) and “one destroys it from its place” in [8:18](#). The emphasis may be not on the rock moving but on its no longer being in its **place**. Alternate translation: “and yes, even large rocks disappear” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 14:19

its flooding washes away the dust of the earth

The pronoun **its** refers to the **earth**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “the flooding of the earth washes away its dust” or “when the earth floods, that washes away its dust” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 14:20

You forever overpower him

Job is speaking as if each person were in a lifelong struggle with God and as if God were able to **overpower** or defeat each person throughout his life. Job likely means that people struggle to live, but God is able to enforce his decree that each person must ultimately die after living for a certain time. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “You make people’s bodies wear out throughout their lives” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he goes away

Job is using the expression **goes away** to mean “dies.” This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “and he passes away” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

changing his face

The expression **changing his face** describes a person’s face becoming wrinkled as that person ages. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “making his face wrinkled” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

changing his face

Job may be using one part of the aging process, the **changing** of the **face** to become wrinkled, to mean the entire process. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “causing him to age” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

you send him away

Job is implicitly describing how God will **send** a person **away** from the community of living people to the abode of the dead. Job will describe this isolation in more detail in the next two verses. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “you send him away from the community of living people to the abode of the dead” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 14:21

His sons

Here the masculine term **sons** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "His children" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 14:22

Only his flesh grieves for him, and {only} his soul mourns for him

Job is using parts of a person, his **flesh** and his **soul**, to mean all of a person in the act of grieving and mourning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He alone grieves for himself, yes, he alone mourns for himself" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 15

Job 15 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

In this chapter, Job's friend Eliphaz speaks to him once again. This time he speaks more strongly than he spoke before. - Verses 1–10: Eliphaz argues that the insights of traditional wisdom are on his side. - Verses 11–16: Eliphaz argues that Job should not defiantly insist that he is righteous. - Verses 17–19: Eliphaz invites Job to consider the insights of traditional wisdom. - Verses 20–35: Eliphaz quotes the insights of traditional wisdom.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Job 15:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 15:2

Will the wise answer {with} knowledge of wind and fill his belly {with} the east wind

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. This verse is the beginning of a question that continues into the next verse, but if you translate it as a statement or as an exclamation, it may be helpful to make it a separate sentence in your translation. Alternate translation: "A wise person does not answer with knowledge of wind or fill his belly with the east wind!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will the wise answer {with} knowledge of wind and fill his belly {with} the east wind

Eliphaz is talking about Job in the third person, even though he is speaking to him directly. He is saying that Job himself must not be a wise person, since he has been talking in this way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "I can tell that you are not a wise person, because you have answered with knowledge of wind, yes, you have filled your belly with the east wind!" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Will the wise answer

Eliphaz is using the adjective **wise** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "Will the wise person answer" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

with} knowledge of wind

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job's **knowledge** consisted literally of **wind**. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language, as the UST models. Eliphaz could mean: (1) that Job is talking a lot, making a loud sound, but not saying anything of substance, just as the wind blows loudly but is only air. Alternate translation: "with such bluster" (2) that what Job is saying is insubstantial, as if it were the air that the wind was blowing around. Alternate translation: "with such empty statements" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and fill his belly {with} the east wind

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job has literally filled his **belly** with the **east wind**. In this location, the wind from the east brought hot air from the desert. Eliphaz is using this image to portray Job as taking deep breaths so that he can speak at length and then breathing out hot air as he speaks. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language, as the UST models. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "No, a wise man would not be so full of hot air" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 15:3

reasoning with a word {that} does not benefit and {with} words {that} do not have profit in them

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. This verse is the continuation of a question that began in the previous verse, but it may be helpful to make it a separate sentence in your translation. Alternate translation: "No, a wise person does not reason with a word that does not benefit or with words that do not have profit in them!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

reasoning with a word {that} does not benefit and {with} words {that} do not have profit in them

Eliphaz is using the terms **word** and **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "reasoning by saying things that do not benefit and by making statements that do not have profit in them" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:4

you destroy fear

For emphasis, Eliphaz is stating the pronoun **you**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **destroy**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “you are completely destroying fear” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

fear

By **fear**, Eliphaz implicitly means the fear of God, that is, reverent respect for God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “the fear of God” or “reverent respect for God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

devotion to the face of God

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Eliphaz is using the term to describe **devotion** that someone would offer to God as one person to another. Alternate translation: “personal devotion to God” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:5

your iniquity teaches your mouth

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job's **iniquity** were a living thing that was teaching his **mouth** what to say. He means that Job is saying wrong things about God in order to excuse his own sin. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you are saying things to excuse your iniquity" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and you choose the tongue of the crafty

Eliphaz is using the term **tongue** by association to mean speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you are deliberately speaking as the crafty do" or "you know that you are speaking deceitfully" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the crafty

Eliphaz is using the adjective **crafty** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "crafty people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 15:6

Your mouth condemns you, and not I, and your lips testify against you

Eliphaz is speaking of Job's **mouth** and **lips** as if they were living things that could **condemn** and **testify against** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It is clear from what you say that you are wrong; I do not need to prove that. Indeed, what you say provides evidence that you are wrong" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 15:7

Were you born the first man, and to the face of the hills were you formed

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You were not born the first man! No, you were not formed to the face of the hills!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Were you born the first man, and to the face of the hills were you formed

Eliphaz is implicitly challenging Job not to consider himself wiser than everyone else because, after all, he is not older than everyone else. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "You should not think that you are wiser than everyone else, because you were not born the first man! No, you were not formed to the face of the hills!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Were you born the first man, and to the face of the hills were you formed

Eliphaz is overstating his point for emphasis as he challenges Job not to consider himself wiser than others. If a speaker of your language would not make this kind of overstatement, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "You should not think that you are wiser than everyone else, because you are not older than the other wise people in our community" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Were you born the first man

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Are you the first person who ever lived" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the first man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "the first human" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

and to the face of the hills were you formed

Here the word **face** represents the presence of something by association with the way people can see the face of a person who is present. By asking whether Job was **formed** in the presence of **the hills**, Eliphaz is asking whether Job was formed at the same time as the hills, that is, long ago. Alternate translation: "and were you formed when the hills were formed" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and to the face of the hills were you formed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "and did God form you when he formed the hills" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the hills

Eliphaz is using one part of the earth, its **hills**, to mean all of it as God created it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the earth” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 15:8

Do you hear the counsel of God? Do you limit wisdom to yourself

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You do not hear the counsel of God! You cannot limit wisdom to yourself!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 15:9

What do you know, and we do not know? What} do you understand, and it {is} not with us

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You do not know anything that we do not know! You do not understand anything that we do not understand!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

do you understand, and it {is} not with us

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "What do you understand that we do not understand?" (See: **Ellipsis (p. 1174)**)

and it {is} not with us

In this context, the expression **with us** indicates understanding. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "that we do not understand" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 15:10

Both the gray-haired and the aged

Eliphaz is using the adjectives **gray-haired** and **aged** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "Both gray-haired people and aged people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Both the gray-haired and the aged

The terms **gray-haired** and **aged** mean similar things. Eliphaz is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "The most senior people" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

are} with us

In this context, the expression **with us** indicates agreement. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "agree with us" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

greater than your father {in} days

Eliphaz is using this adjective phrase as a noun phrase to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this phrase with an equivalent one. Alternate translation: "people who are greater than your father in days" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

greater than your father {in} days

Eliphaz is using the term **days** to refer by association to how long a person has lived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "people who are greater in age than your father" or "people who are older than your father" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:11

Are} the consolations of God too small for you, or a word in gentleness to you

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You seem to consider the consolations of God to be too small for you. You seem to feel the same way about a word spoken in gentleness to you." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Are} the consolations of God too small for you

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job literally considered the **consolations of God** to be **small** in size. He means that Job does not appear to consider them significant. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Do you consider the consolations of God to be insignificant" or "You seem to consider the consolations of God to be insignificant" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the consolations of God

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **consolations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "Is what God is doing to comfort you" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

or a word in gentleness to you

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "or is a word in gentleness to you too small for you" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

or a word in gentleness to you

Eliphaz is using the term **word** to mean what he and the other friends have been saying to Job by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "or what we have been telling you in gentleness" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

or a word in gentleness to you

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **gentleness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "or what we have been telling you gently" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

or a word in gentleness to you

It may not seem that Job's friends have been speaking to him **in gentleness**. Eliphaz has just said that he is wicked and guilty, and the other friends have said similar things. Eliphaz could mean: (1) that he and the other friends have been trying to speak to Job as gently as they could. Alternate translation: "or words that your friends have been speaking to you as gently as they could" (2) that given Job's apparent disregard for God's consolations, he and the other friends have been too gentle with Job. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "Perhaps we need to speak even more sternly to you!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 15:12

Why does your heart carry you away and why do your eyes flash

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. (This is the beginning of a sentence that Eliphaz completes in the next verse.) Alternate translation: “Your heart should not carry you away and your eyes should not flash” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why does your heart carry you away

Eliphaz is speaking of Job’s **heart** as if it were a living thing that could **carry** him **away**. He is using Job’s heart to represent his emotions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Why are you allowing yourself to become so emotional” or, as a statement, “You should not allow yourself to become so emotional” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and why do your eyes flash

Eliphaz is speaking of anger by association with the way that the **eyes** of a person who is angry will appear to **flash** or give off light. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and why are you so angry” or as a statement, “and you should not be so angry” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:13

that you turn your spirit against God

Eliphaz is using one part of Job, his **spirit**, to mean all of him in the act of turning against God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "that you turn yourself against God" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and bring out words from your mouth

Eliphaz is using the term **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words and the term **mouth** to mean speaking. He is suggesting that the things Job has been saying are inappropriate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and say such inappropriate things" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:14

What {is} man, that he should be pure, or that one born of a woman should be righteous

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Man cannot be clean! No, one born of a woman cannot be righteous!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "a human being" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

he should be pure

Eliphaz is speaking as if people who are innocent of wrongdoing are literally **clean**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he should be innocent" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

one born of a woman

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "someone to whom a woman has given birth" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

one born of a woman

Eliphaz is speaking of human mortality by association with the way that people are **born** physically and, by implication, will also die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "a mortal" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:15

he does not trust

The pronoun **he** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God does not trust” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

in his holy ones

Eliphaz is using the expression **holy ones** to refer to the angels, by association with the way that angels are holy. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in his angels” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and the heavens are not clean

Eliphaz is speaking as if things that are pure are literally **clean**, that is, not physically dirty. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the heavens are not pure” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and the heavens are not clean

By **the heavens**, Eliphaz likely means the sky, which is a created object and therefore finite and incapable of perfection. It is unlikely that Eliphaz is referring to heaven, the abode of God, and saying that it is not **clean**, meaning “pure.” You could clarify this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and not even the sky is pure” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in his eyes

Eliphaz is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. Sight, in turn, represents attention, perspective, and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “from his perspective” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:16

indeed that the abominable and the corrupted

Indeed that is an expression that indicates that what follows is greater in degree than what a person has just said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “how much less the abominable and the corrupted” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

indeed that the abominable and the corrupted

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “how much less are the abominable and the corrupted clean in his eyes” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

the abominable and the corrupted

Eliphaz is using the adjectives **abominable** and **corrupted** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “abominable and corrupt people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the abominable and the corrupted

The terms **abominable** and **corrupted** mean similar things. Eliphaz is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “humans, who are so very wicked” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

and the corrupted

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and the corrupt” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

a man drinking iniquity like water

Eliphaz seems to be referring implicitly to Job when he speaks of **a man drinking iniquity like water**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “such as a man like you who drinks iniquity like water” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

a man drinking iniquity like water

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job were literally **drinking** iniquity the way he would drink **water**. He means that Job eagerly and willingly does wrong things, the way thirsty people eagerly and willingly drink water. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “a man who freely commits iniquity” or “such as a man like you who freely commits iniquity” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 15:17

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 15:18

what the wise have declared— and not hidden—from their fathers

Eliphaz is not suggesting that **the wise** might have **hidden** something from **their fathers**. He means that they have declared what they learned from their fathers and not hidden any of it from the people of their own generation. It may be helpful to move the information that the wise have **not hidden** what they learned to the end of the sentence. Alternate translation: “what the wise have declared from their fathers and not hidden” (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

the wise

Eliphaz is using the adjective **wise** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wise people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

from their fathers

Although the term **fathers** is masculine, Eliphaz is using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “from their ancestors” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 15:19

To them alone the land was given, and no stranger passed in their midst

By **them**, Eliphaz means the “fathers” or ancestors whom he described in the previous verse, and by **the land** he probably means Edom and specifically his home city of Teman, which was renowned for its wisdom (see Jeremiah 49:7). By saying that only those ancestors lived there and **no stranger** passed among them, he means that their wisdom was not diluted by outside influences. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “My wise ancestors lived by themselves in Teman, where there were no outside influences to dilute their wisdom” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the land was given

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “God gave the land” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 15:20

All of the days of the wicked

Eliphaz is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "For the whole lifetime of the wicked" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the wicked

Eliphaz is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "the wicked person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

is writhing

Eliphaz means implicitly that a wicked person will be **writhing** in pain because God will be punishing him for his sin. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "he is writhing in pain from God's punishments" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the number of years, they are reserved for the oppressor

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and the number of years that he must suffer punishment for his own sins, they are reserved for the oppressor" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

they are reserved

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God has reserved them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 15:21

The sound of terrors {is} in his ears

Eliphaz is using the term **ears** by association to mean hearing. By saying that the wicked person hears **the sound of terrors**, Eliphaz means by association that he experiences those terrors. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He experiences terrible things" (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

in prosperity

The word translated **prosperity** can also mean "peace." Eliphaz could be describing: (1) how wicked people may become prosperous for a time. Alternate translation: "though he may become prosperous," (2) how wicked people may enjoy peace for a time. Alternate translation: "just when he is at peace," (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the destroyer comes upon him

Eliphaz is describing how the wicked experience the destruction and loss of their property, and he is speaking of that destruction as if it were a living thing that **comes upon** the wicked. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "his property is suddenly destroyed" or "he suddenly loses his property" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 15:22

He does not believe to return from darkness

Eliphaz is speaking as if this wicked person has literally gone to a place where there is **darkness** and as if that wicked person does not believe that he can **return** from there. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “He does not believe that his troubles will ever end” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He does not believe to return from darkness

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this with a positive expression. Alternate translation: “He believes that he will always have troubles” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

and he is selected for the sword

It is possible that this second part of the verse also describes what wicked people **believe**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and he is afraid that he is selected for the sword” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and he is selected for the sword

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and God has selected him for the sword” or “and God has determined that someone will kill him with a sword” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the sword

Eliphaz is using one kind of deadly weapon, the **sword**, by association to mean violent death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “violent death” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:23

He {is} wandering for bread—‘Where {is it

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “He is wandering for bread, asking where it is” or “He is wandering for bread, wondering where he will find it” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

for bread

Eliphaz is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “for food” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the day of darkness

Eliphaz is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “a time of darkness” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the day of darkness

Eliphaz is speaking as if this wicked person knows that a time is coming when there will literally be **darkness** during the day. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “a time of great trouble” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

is} prepared at hand

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “that God has prepared for him is at hand” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

is} prepared at hand

Eliphaz is using the expression **at hand** to mean “nearby,” and he means near in time rather than near in place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “is prepared and just about to happen” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 15:24

Distress and anguish terrify him

Eliphaz is speaking of **Distress** and **anguish** as if they were living things that could **terrify** a wicked person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “He is so afraid of what is going to happen to him that he continually feels distress and anguish” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Distress and anguish terrify him

The terms **Distress** and **anguish** mean similar things. Eliphaz is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “Great distress terrifies him” or “He is so afraid of what is going to happen to him that he continually feels great distress” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

it overpowers him

The pronoun **it** refers to **Distress and anguish**. Eliphaz is speaking of these two similar things as if they were one thing. Your language may permit you to do that in your translation. Alternatively, it may be more natural in your language to use a plural pronoun. Alternate translation: “they overpower him” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 15:25

he has stretched out his hand against God

When Eliphaz says that the wicked person has **stretched out his hand**, he means specifically that he has **stretched out a hand** that is holding a sword or some other weapon. In other words, this expression means to fight against someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he has fought against God" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 15:26

He rushes against him with the neck, with the thickness of the bosses of his shields

Eliphaz is speaking as if a wicked person would literally attack God in this way. He is actually making a comparison to describe the arrogant confidence with which a wicked person defies God. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this as a comparison rather than as a literal statement. Alternate translation: “He opposes God as if he were a warrior arrogantly attacking God, confident that his thick shield would protect him” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He rushes against him

The pronoun **He** refers to the wicked person, while the pronoun **him** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “The wicked person rushes against God” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

with the neck

This expression refers to the attitude of someone who is holding his neck straight and his head high, displaying arrogant confidence with his posture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “arrogantly” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

with the thickness of the bosses of his shields

The word “boss” describes the outwardly rounded part of a shield. A warrior would face this part of the shield against an enemy, holding the shield by a handle inside the boss. If a shield had a thick boss, that would protect the warrior against blows from swords and spears, and it would also allow a warrior to use the shield to knock an opponent down and pin him to the ground. If your readers would not be familiar with what **bosses of shields** are, in your translation you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “confident that he can use his thick shield to protect himself and attack his opponent” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

with the thickness of

Eliphaz speaks in this verse of the **thickness* of the shield that the wicked person would use against God, but in the next verse he indicates that the wicked person is actually “fat” and so not in shape physically for combat. So while Eliphaz seems to suggest here that the wicked person is a formidable foe, he actually means the opposite of what he is saying, as the next verse reveals. To help your readers recognize this, if your language has a word that can mean both “thick” and “fat,” it would be appropriate to use that word here in your translation. (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

the bosses of his shields

By using the plural forms **bosses** and **shields**, Eliphaz seems to be portraying the wicked person as if he were an army or as if he were commanding an army. It may be more natural in your language to use singular forms. Alternate translation: “the boss of his shield” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 15:27

though he has covered his face with his fat and made blubber on the flanks

Eliphaz is using two parts of the wicked person, his **face** and his **flanks**, to indicate that his whole body is obese. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “though he is very fat” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

though he has covered his face with his fat and made blubber on the flanks

The implication is that the wicked person has a **face** that is **fat** and **flanks** that have **blubber** because he overeats and lives indolently. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “he is very fat because he eats too much and lives a lazy life” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 15:28

And he lives

Eliphaz is using the word **And** to describe what happens to the wicked after he unsuccessfully opposes God. In the previous verse, Eliphaz was describing the former prosperity of the wicked person. In this verse, he is describing what happens to the wicked person after he loses his prosperity. The implication may be that the wicked person needs to live in abandoned places not only because he is poor but also because he is an outcast, that is, because others have rejected him. Alternate translation: "Then he becomes poor and outcast, and so" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

Job 15:29

and his wealth will not stand

See how you translated the term **stand** in [14:2](#). Alternate translation: “and his wealth will not remain” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and their possessions will not spread over the land

See how you translated the similar expression in [1:10](#). Alternate translation: “and they will not have large herds of cattle” or “and he will not have large herds of cattle” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

their possessions

The pronoun **their** refers to wicked people. Since Eliphaz speaks of a wicked person in the singular in the first part of this verse, it may be more natural in your language to use the singular here as well. Alternate translation: “his possessions” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 15:30

He will not depart from darkness

See how you translated the similar expression in [15:22](#). Alternate translation: “His troubles will never end” (See: [Metaphor \(p.1238\)](#))

a flame will dry up his shoots

Eliphaz is speaking as if the wicked person were literally a plant or bush whose **stalks** a **flame** could **dry up** or burn up. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “He will certainly perish” (See: [Metaphor \(p.1238\)](#))

and he will depart at the breath of his mouth

Eliphaz is speaking as if a hot wind that dried up plants were actually **breath** from God’s **mouth**. (The same image appears elsewhere in the Bible, for example, in [Isaiah 40:7](#), “The grass withers, the flower wilts, for the breath of Yahweh blows on it.”) If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, God will destroy him” (See: [Metaphor \(p.1238\)](#))

his mouth

The pronoun **his** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God’s mouth” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them \(p.1267\)](#))

and he will depart

Eliphaz is using the word **depart** to mean “die.” This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “and he will pass away” or “and he will die” (See: [Euphemism \(p.1177\)](#))

Job 15:31

Let him not trust in emptiness, deceiving himself

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **emptiness** and **recompense**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: "Let him not trust in things that have no value... for in return he will receive things that have no value" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 15:32

When {it is} not his day

Eliphaz assumes that Job will understand that by **his day**, he means the day for the wicked to die. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “When it is not his day to die” or “Before the time would have come for him to die” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

it will be fulfilled

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “this will happen” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and his branch will not be green

Eliphaz is continuing the image from the previous verse of the wicked person being like a plant or bush. He is speaking of this plant or bush being alive by association with the way that its branches would be **green** inside if it were alive. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, he will die” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 15:33

He will shake off his unripe grapes like a grapevine, and he will cast off his blossoms like an olive tree

The point of these comparisons is that the wicked person will not be able to succeed in his endeavors. They will all end in failure, just as a **grapevine** may not be able to nourish its grapes and so they will fall off while they are still **unripe**, and just as an **olive tree** might lose its **blossoms** due to cold weather in the spring and not bear any fruit that year. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "His endeavors will fail, as if he were a grapevine that lost its grapes because it could not nourish them or an olive tree that bore no fruit because it shed its blossoms due to cold weather in the spring" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

He will shake off his unripe grapes like a grapevine, and he will cast off his blossoms like an olive tree

Eliphaz speaks as if the grapevine itself would **shake off** its grapes and as if the olive tree itself would **cast off** its blossoms. He means that the grapes will drop from the vine and the blossoms will fall off the tree. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He will be like a grapevine whose grapes drop off and an olive tree whose blossoms fall off" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 15:34

the godless

Eliphaz is using the adjective **godless** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “godless people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

is} barren

This could mean: (1) that godless people literally will have no children or that they will have no children who survive them. Alternate translation: “will have no children who survive them” (2) that godless people will produce nothing of enduring value, as if they had no descendants. Alternate translation: “will produce nothing of enduring value” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and fire devours the tents of bribery

Eliphaz is speaking as if **fire** would literally devour or eat up these **tents**. He means that fire would destroy them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and fire destroys the tents of bribery” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and fire devours the tents of bribery

Eliphaz is using the term **bribery** by association to mean people who pay and demand bribes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and fire destroys the tents of people who engage in bribery” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and fire devours the tents of bribery

Eliphaz is speaking as if the **tents** of people who engage in **bribery** will literally burn up in a **fire**. He means that they will be destroyed by one means or another. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the tents of people who engage in bribery will be destroyed” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and fire devours the tents of bribery

Eliphaz is using one possession of wicked people, the **tents** in which they live, to mean all of their possessions and their standing in the community. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar expression in [8:22](#). Alternate translation: “and those who practice bribery will be without status or means” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 15:35

They conceive trouble and bear iniquity, and their womb fashions deceit

Eliphaz is speaking as if wicked people were literally women who had **trouble**, **iniquity**, and **deceit** as their children. He means that wicked people produce these things in their lives. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They think of bad things to do and they do wicked things, yes, they intentionally deceive others" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 16

Job 16 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the beginning of Job's response to Eliphaz's second speech. In verses 1–6, Job complains that his friends have not helped him with their advice. In verses 7–22, Job describes how he feels God has made him suffer. Job briefly addresses God directly in verses 7 and 8.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

“witness,” “advocate,” and “intercessor”

In verses 19–21, Job describes the need for someone to plead his case to God in heaven. This is likely the same figure whom Job calls his “redeemer” in 19:25. Although Job does not seem to be giving a prophecy knowingly about the Messiah, the role that he describes closely parallels the way that Jesus intercedes for people in heaven. He says that such a person would testify that he had not done wrong (be his “witness”), take his side (be his “advocate”), and plead with God not to punish him (be his “intercessor”). In your translation, use words that describe someone in your culture who does these things for another person. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/intercede\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/testimony\]\]](#))

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Variation between singular and plural “you”

In verses 1–8, Job sometimes uses the singular form of “you” to address either Eliphaz or God and he sometimes uses the plural form of “you” to address all three of his friends together. Notes identify which form he is using in each instance so that you can use the appropriate form in your translation if your language marks a distinction between singular and plural “you.”

Job 16:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 16:2

all of you {are}

As the context suggests, the word **you** is plural here because Job is using it to refer to his three friends. So use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

comforters of trouble

Job is not using this possessive form to say that his friends are providing comfort to **trouble**. He is using the form to say that in their attempts to be his **comforters**, they are causing him further trouble. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "troublesome counselors" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 16:3

Is there} an end to words of wind? Or what compels you that you answer

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "I wish that you would stop speaking these words of wind! I do not think anything compels you to answer." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

to words of wind

Job is answering Eliphaz with his own words. See how you translated the similar expression in [15:2](#). Alternate translation: "to insubstantial words" or "to such bluster" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you answer

The word **you** is singular here because Job is using it to refer only to Eliphaz, who has just spoken to him. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

Job 16:4

if your souls were where my soul is

Job is using one part of himself and his friends, their **souls**, to mean all of them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “if you were in my place” (See: **Synecdoche (p. 1294)**)

like you & your souls & against you & at you

The word **you** is plural in each of these instances because Job is using it to refer to his three friends. So use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

I would join words together

Job is using the term **words** to mean the things that he would say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I would say one thing after another” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and I would shake my head at you

To **shake** the **head** at someone is a symbolic action indicating disapproval. This action may have the same meaning in your culture. If not, your culture may have a comparable gesture that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “and I would point my finger at you” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 16:5

I would strengthen you with my mouth, and the moving of my lips would relieve {you

For emphasis, Job is saying the opposite of what he means. He does not feel that his friends actually have been strengthening him or relieving him. If a speaker of your language would not say the opposite of what he means for emphasis, in your translation you could indicate what Job actually means. Alternate translation: "I would say things such as you have been saying, thinking that I was strengthening and comforting you, even though saying such things would actually make you feel worse, as you have been making me feel worse" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

I would strengthen you

The word **you** is plural here because Job is using it to refer to his three friends. So use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

with my mouth, and the moving of my lips

Job is using the terms **mouth** and **lips** by association to mean speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "by what I said, and the things that I spoke" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 16:6

my pain is not relieved

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "that does not relieve my pain" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

what goes from me

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "that does not make the pain go away" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 16:7

he has exhausted me

The pronoun **he** most likely refers to God, since the following pronoun **you** seems clearly to address God. Job seems to be referring to God in the third person in order to make a transition from speaking to his friends, and he then seems to be addressing God directly in the second person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “you, God, have exhausted me” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

you have devastated

The word **you** is singular here because Job is using it to refer to God. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

Job 16:8

and you have shriveled me— it has become a witness, and my leanness rises up against me, it testifies against my face

Job is speaking as if his **shriveled** condition, his **leanness**, were a living thing that was serving as a **witness** and testifying against him. He means that people consider him to be guilty of sin because they believe that God is punishing him with a sickness that has made him lose weight. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and because you have afflicted me with a sickness that has made me emaciated, people consider that to be evidence that I have sinned” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and you have shriveled me

The word **you** is singular here because Job is using it to refer to God. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

against my face

Here the word **face** could mean: (1) Job himself, using one part of him to represent all of him. Alternate translation: “against me” (2) Job’s reputation as a righteous person, in a specific sense of the word **face**. Alternate translation: “against my good reputation” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 16:9

he has torn {me} and he has attacked me

Job is speaking as if God were literally a wild animal that had **attacked** and **torn** him. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: “he has been like a wild animal, tearing and attacking me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he has torn {me} and he has attacked me

Since a wild animal would attack its prey before tearing it, it might be more natural to reverse the order of these clauses. Alternate translation: “he has attacked me and he has torn me” (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

he gnashes his teeth against me

This action expresses strong anger. If there is a similar gesture in your culture, you could consider using it here in your translation. You could also indicate the meaning of this gesture. Alternate translation: “he is so angry at me that he grinds his teeth together” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

sharpens his eyes against me

Job is speaking as if God, whom he believes is acting towards him as an **enemy**, were literally sharpening his **eyes**, the way one would sharpen a sword in order to use it dangerously as a weapon. Job means that God is focusing his eyes intently on him to recognize ways to attack him further and to ensure that he, Job, does not escape. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “focuses his eyes intently on me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 16:10

They have gaped at me with their mouth

Opening the mouth wide at someone was a symbolic action that expressed ridicule. If there is a similar gesture in your culture, you could consider using it here in your translation. You could also indicate the meaning of this gesture. Alternate translation: "They open their mouths wide at me in order to ridicule me" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

with their mouth

Since Job is speaking of many people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **mouth**. Alternate translation: "with their mouths" (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

Job 16:11

the hands of

Here, **hands** represents the power and control that people have over something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the power of” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the wicked

Job is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

he throws me

Job is speaking as if God were literally throwing him **into the hands of the wicked**. He means that God is abandoning him to whatever it is that wicked people would want to do to him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he abandons me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 16:12

but he has shattered me, and he has seized my neck and shaken me to pieces

Job is speaking as if God has literally **shattered** him, breaking him into many parts, and **seized** his neck and **shaken** him **to pieces**. He means that God has destroyed everything important in his life—his family, his health, and his possessions. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this as a comparison, as the UST does, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “but he has destroyed my family, my health, and my possessions” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

And he has set me up as a target for him

Job is speaking as if God has literally **set him up as a target**. (He continues this image in the first line of the next verse.) He means that it seems as if God has harmed him very intentionally. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this as a comparison, as the UST does, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Yes, it seems as if he has harmed me very intentionally” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 16:13

his archers have surrounded me

Job is speaking as if **archers** whom God commands have literally **surrounded** him. He means that God has caused him to experience many different troubles. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly, as long as you also used plain language in the last sentence of the previous verse. Alternate translation: “he has caused me to experience many troubles” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He pierces my kidneys and he does not spare; he pours my bile on the ground

Job means implicitly that these archers are seeking mercilessly to kill him by shooting their arrows into his vital organs. (By saying that God **pours** his **bile** on the **ground**, Job means that God’s archers have pierced his liver as well as his **kidneys**, since the liver produces bile and that fluid would spill out of the body if the liver were pierced.) You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “They are seeking mercilessly to kill me by shooting their arrows into my vital organs” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

He pierces my kidneys and he does not spare; he pours my bile on the ground

Job does not mean that arrows have literally pierced his **kidneys** and liver. He is continuing the image of the archers to indicate that it feels to him as if God is mercilessly trying to kill him in a way that he could not possibly survive. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “It feels to me as if God is mercilessly trying to kill me in a way that I could not possibly survive” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He pierces & and he does not spare; he pours

The pronouns **He** and **he** refer to God. Job means that God is doing these things through the symbolic **archers** that he describes in the previous sentence. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use plural pronouns to show that this is a continuation of the image of the archers. Alternate translation: “They pierce my kidneys and do not spare; they pour my bile on the ground” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 16:14

He breaches me, breach upon the face of breach

Job is speaking as if he were a defensive wall around a city and God was smashing openings or breaches in that wall. He means that the continual sufferings that he is experiencing are making him less and less able to be resilient. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He causes me continual sufferings that are making me less and less resilient" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

breach upon the face of breach

This expression could mean: (1) that God is smashing openings in many different places in this wall (which represents Job). Alternate translation, if you choose to represent the image in your translation: "smashing openings in many different places in my wall" (2) that after succeeding in smashing an opening in this wall, God smashes repeatedly in the same place to make that opening bigger. Alternate translation: "ever enlarging the opening in my wall" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

he runs against me like a warrior

Job is speaking as if God were literally running against him the way a **warrior** would run to attack an enemy soldier. Job is answering Eliphaz with his own words. In [15:26](#), Eliphaz used the same image to describe how wicked people oppose God. If you used the image or represented it as a comparison in your translation in that verse, you may wish to translate the corresponding image here in the same way. If you used plain language there, you could use similar language here. Alternate translation: "he opposes me very forcefully" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 16:15

I have sewn sackcloth on my skin

Job is speaking as if he had literally **sewn** sackcloth onto his **skin**. He could mean: (1) that he is continually in mourning, as if he wore sackcloth (a sign of mourning) so frequently that it seemed to be **sewn** onto his skin. Alternate translation: "I am continually in mourning" (2) that he actually has been wearing sackcloth (although the narrative at the beginning of the book does not say so) and it has stuck to his skin because of his boils, as if it were sewn to his skin. Alternate translation: "The sackcloth I have been wearing in grief has stuck to my skin" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and I have thrust my horn into the dust

People in the biblical culture used the **horn** of an animal to represent strength and honor. When they did, they would speak of humans as if they had horns like animals. For example, [Psalm 112:9](#) says of the person who fears Yahweh, "His horn rises high in honor." Job is using the image in the opposite way to say that he is suffering disgrace. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I am suffering great disgrace" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 16:16

and on my eyelids {is} a dark shadow

Job is describing the fact that he has not been sleeping well, by association with the way that dark circles form around the eyes of someone who lacks sleep. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and I have dark circles around my eyes from lack of sleep” (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

Job 16:17

violence {is} not in my hands

Job is using one part of himself, his **hands**, to mean all of him in the potential act of committing **violence**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have not committed any violence" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

is} pure

Job is speaking as if his prayer were literally **pure**, that is, as if it were a physical substance that had nothing else mixed in. He means that when he prays, he means just what he says and he has no other motives other than sincerely speaking with God. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "is sincere" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 16:18

Earth, do not conceal my blood

Job is speaking to something that he knows cannot hear him, the **Earth**. He is doing that to show in a strong way how he feels about what has been happening to him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I hope that when I die, my blood will remain visible on the earth" (See: **Apostrophe (p.1139)**)

Earth, do not conceal my blood

Job is speaking as if he were literally going to be murdered and as if his **blood** were going to fall to the ground and soak into the earth unless something prevented that. He means that he is like the victim of a deadly crime in that he deserves justice but there is a risk that he will not receive it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I want to receive justice for what is happening to me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and may {there} not be a {hiding} place for my cry

It is likely that Job is continuing to address the **Earth** in this part of the verse. Once again he is doing that in order to show in a strong way how he feels about what has been happening to him. Job is speaking as if the earth could hear him and as if it could make sure that none of its locations would provide a **place** for anyone to hide Job's **cry** so that it was not answered. The context makes clear that this is a cry for justice. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I hope that my cry for justice is answered and not hidden" (See: **Apostrophe (p.1139)**)

Job 16:19

my witness {is} in the heavens, and my advocate {is} in the heights

See the discussion in the General Notes to this chapter to decide how to translate the terms **witness** and **advocate**, which both describe the same person, someone whom Job expects will intercede for him in heaven. Alternate translation: “the person who has taken my side is pleading my case to God in heaven” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

is} in the heights

Job is using the term **heights** to mean heaven, which is high above the earth. The plural form probably identifies these **heights** as the supreme example of their class. That is, while being on top of a mountain gives someone a commanding position, ruling from heaven gives God the supremely commanding position. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “is in highest heaven” or “is in heaven, where he rules supremely” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 16:20

My intercessors {are} my friends

This could mean: (1) that Job has a single individual in mind here, the one he called his “witness” and “advocate” in the previous verse. While the terms **intercessors** and **friends** are plural, it seems Job could be using plural forms to indicate an indefinite individual. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: “There is a certain intercessor who is my friend” (2) that Job is saying that by contrast with the way this “witness” and “advocate” will take his side, his friends have been scoffing at him. The word translated **intercessors** can also mean “scoffers” (although Job uses it again in [33:23](#) to mean “intercessor”). Alternate translation: “My friends are scoffing at me” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

my eye weeps to God

Job is using one part of himself, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of weeping. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I am pleading tearfully to God for mercy” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 16:21

for a man

When he refers to a **man** in the first part of this verse, Job seems to be speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “for me” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

and a son of man for his neighbor

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and a son of man argues for his neighbor” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and a son of man for his neighbor

In this instance, Job is using the word **and** to say that the phrase it introduces is just as true as the previous phrase. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “just as a son of man argues for his neighbor” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and a son of man for his neighbor

Although the terms **son** and **man** are masculine, the phrase **a son of man** has a generic sense and means “a human being.” If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “just as one human being argues on behalf of another human being” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 16:22

years of number will come

Job is using the expression **years of number** to mean “a few years.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “a few years will go by” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and I will go {on} a path, I will not return

When Job says that he will **go** on a **path** and **not return**, he means that he will die. This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “and I will pass away” or “and then I will die” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

Job 17

Job 17 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the conclusion of Job's response to Eliphaz's second speech. Job expresses his disappointment with his friends' advice, he asks Yahweh to help him, and he wishes that he had good things to hope for.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Job 17:1

My spirit is destroyed, my days are extinguished

Job is making an overstatement when he says that his **spirit** has already been **destroyed** and his **days** have already been **extinguished**. He means that this is nearly the case. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My spirit is nearly destroyed, my days are nearly extinguished" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

My spirit is destroyed, my days are extinguished

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "My troubles have nearly destroyed my spirit and extinguished my days" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

My spirit

This could mean: (1) Job's life. Job would be using one part of himself, his **spirit**, to mean all of him. Alternate translation: "My life" (2) Job's strength and morale. Alternate translation: "My strength" or "My morale" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

my days are extinguished

Job is using the term **days** to mean a specific period of time, his lifetime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "my life is extinguished" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

my days are extinguished

Job is speaking as if his life were literally a flame that something had **extinguished** or snuffed out. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "my life is almost over" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

graves {are} for me

While the term **graves** is plural, it seems unlikely that Job means he will be buried in more than one grave. (1) Job could be using the plural form to indicate an indefinite thing. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: "there is a grave ready for me somewhere" (2) Job could be speaking of a graveyard or cemetery by association with the way that such a place contains many **graves**. Alternate translation: "the graveyard is ready for me" (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

graves {are} for me

Job is saying that **graves** are ready for him to mean that he will die soon. This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "soon I will die" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

Job 17:2

If {there are} not mockers with me

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "There are mockers with me, are there not?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If {there are} not mockers with me

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Surely there are mockers with me!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If {there are} not mockers with me

By **mockers**, Job most likely means his friends. He would be speaking of them in the third person even though they are present. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "All three of you have been mocking me!" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

And on their provocations my eye lingers

Job is using one part of himself, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, using the second person: "Yes, all I can see is your provocations" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

And on their provocations my eye lingers

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **provocations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "Yes, all I can see is you provoking me" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

And on their provocations my eye lingers

The implication is that Job's friends have only been provoking him, not comforting him, because otherwise he would be able to recognize their comfort. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "You have only been provoking me, not comforting me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 17:3

Please set down, be surety for me with you

The word **you** and the implied “you” in the imperative **set** and in the imperative **be surety for** are singular because they refer to God. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

Please set down, be surety for me with you

Job is speaking as if God would literally **set down**, that is, surrender to a court, something of value in order to guarantee Job’s appearance in court and good conduct. Job is similarly speaking as if God would literally **be surety** for him, that is, personally guarantee his appearance and conduct. Job speaks this way even though he says at the same time that God himself would be trying his case (that is the meaning of **with you**). Your culture may have a similar custom that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “Please put up a bond for me even as you try my case” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Who {is} he {who} will strike himself to my hand

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “No one else will strike himself to my hand” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Who {is} he {who} will strike himself to my hand

Job is speaking of one person striking his hand against a second person’s hand as a symbolic action in order to show that he was committing himself to serve as a guarantor for that second person. Your culture may have a similar practice that you could use in your translation, and you can also explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “No one else will shake hands with me to pledge that he will be my guarantor” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 17:4

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said in the previous verse that he believed no one else would be a guarantor for him. Alternate translation: "My friends will not be my guarantors because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

you have hidden their hearts away from understanding

Job is speaking as if God had literally **hidden** the **hearts** of his friends in a place where their hearts would not come in contact with **understanding**. Within the context of this image, Job is using the heart to represent the mind. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you have kept their minds from understanding" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you will not exalt {them

Job is speaking as if God would literally **exalt** his friends or lift them up to a height. He means that God would honor them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you will not honor them" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

you will not exalt {them

Job means implicitly that since God has kept his friends from understanding that he is innocent, God will not **exalt** or honor his friends by giving a guilty verdict against him, thereby vindicating what the friends have been saying. That would be allowing error to triumph. You could indicate that explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "you will not vindicate what they have been erroneously saying by giving a guilty verdict against me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 17:5

He {who} denounces friends for a reward, even the eyes of his sons will fail

Job is using one thing that God does to maintain justice, punish those who commit perjury for a bribe, to represent all that God does to maintain justice. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "After all, you maintain justice by punishing people who corrupt court proceedings" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

even the eyes of his sons will fail

Job is speaking of how the **eyes** of people who are dying **fail** (no longer see) in order to describe those people dying. This is a poetic way of speaking about death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "his sons will certainly die" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

his sons

Here the masculine term **sons** has a generic sense that includes both sons and daughters. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "his children" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 17:6

But he has made me

The pronoun **he** refers to God. After briefly speaking directly to God in verses 3 and 4, Job now speaks of God once again in the third person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "But God has made me" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

a saying of the peoples

Job is using the word **saying** to mean that the **peoples** are citing him by name as an outstanding example of someone who seemed to be prospering because he was righteous but who came to ruin because he was actually wicked. Your language may have an expression for this practice of citing people by name as examples that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "a byword for the peoples" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and I have become a spitting in the face

People were **spitting** in Job's **face** as a symbolic action to show their contempt for him as a wicked person, which he appeared to them to be. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "and people have even been spitting in my face to show their contempt for me because they think I am a wicked person" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 17:7

and my eye is dim from sorrow

Job is using the term **eye** by association to mean sight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "because of my sorrow, I can only see dimly" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

are} like a shadow

The point of this comparison is that just as a **shadow** is insubstantial, so Job's **members**, that is, the parts of his body, have become very thin. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "have become as thin as a shadow" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 17:8

The upright & and the innocent & the godless

Job is using the adjectives **upright**, **innocent**, and **godless** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "Upright people ... and innocent people ... godless people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p. 1246)**)

Job 17:9

the righteous & and the clean of hands

Job is using the adjectives **righteous** and **clean** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “righteous people ... and people whose hands are clean” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

And & will hold his way

Job is speaking of how God wants a person to live, or of the future that God has planned for a person, as if that were a **way** or path that God wants the person to walk along. When Job says that the **righteous** will **hold** his way, he means that that person will continue to walk along that path. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “And ... will continue to live as God desires” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and the clean of hands

Job is speaking as if people who are innocent of wrongdoing have **hands** that are literally **clean**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and innocent people” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

will add strength

When Job says that innocent people **will add strength**, he means by this expression that they will continually grow stronger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “will grow stronger and stronger” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 17:10

all of them

Job is speaking about his friends in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: “all of you” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

may you return, and come

This phrase may be expressing a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **return** tells in what way Job wants his friends to **come**. He wants them to try speaking with him “again.” If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “come again” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

a wise {person} among you

Job is using the adjective **wise** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. The ULT indicates this by adding the word **person**. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “anyone among you who is wise” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 17:11

My days have passed

Job is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time, his lifetime. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My life is almost over" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

my plans are broken

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "I will not be able to fulfill my plans" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the desires of my heart

Job is speaking of his **heart** as if it were a living thing that could have **desires**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the things that I deeply desired" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 17:12

They change night into day

Job is speaking about troubled times in life as if they were literally **night** and happy, prosperous times in life as if they were literally **day**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They claim that what is happening to me is actually good" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

They change

The pronoun **They** refers to Job's friends. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "My friends change" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

They change

Job is speaking about his friends in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "You, my friends, change" or "You change" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Light is near from the face of darkness

Many interpreters believe that in this sentence, Job is summarizing what his friends have been telling him. You may wish to represent the sentence in your translation as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "You say, 'Light is near from the face of darkness'" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1167)**)

Light is near from the face of darkness

Here the word **face** represents the presence of something, by association with the way that people can see the face of a person who is present. Alternate translation: "Light is near from the presence of darkness" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Light is near from the face of darkness

Job may be using a proverb, a short, popular saying about something that is generally true in life, to summarize what his friends have been telling him. Or his friends may have been quoting this proverb themselves in their advice to Job. Your language may have a similar saying that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "It's always darkest before the dawn" (See: **Proverbs (p.1270)**)

Job 17:13

if} in the darkness I have spread out my bed

Job is using the single activity of preparing a **bed** on which to sleep to mean all that is involved in making a place one's home. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if I have made my home in the realm of the dead" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

if} in the darkness

Job is using the term **darkness** to mean the realm of the dead, Sheol, by association with the way that it is dark there. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if in the realm of the dead" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 17:14

if} I call to the pit, 'You {are} my father

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "if I tell the pit that it is my father" or "if I call the pit my father" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

if} I call to the pit, 'You {are} my father

If Job said this, he would be saying that **the pit** was his home, by association with the way that a person lives in the home of his **father**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if I call to the pit, 'You {are} my home'" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

if} I call to the pit, 'You {are} my father

If Job did speak this way to **the pit**, that is, to the realm of the dead, he would be speaking to something that he knew could not hear and understand him in order to make an emphatic statement. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if I said that the pit was certainly going to be my home" (See: **Apostrophe (p.1139)**)

to the worm, 'My mother' or 'My sister

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "or if I call to the worm and say, 'You are my mother,' or, 'You are my sister'" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

to the worm, 'My mother' or 'My sister

If Job said this to a **worm**, such as would be found in a grave, he would be saying that the grave was going to be his home, by association with the way that a person shares a home with his **mother** and **sister**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "or if I call to the worm, 'I am going to share the grave with you'" or "or if I call to the worm, 'I am going to be in a grave, just as you are'" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

to the worm, 'My mother' or 'My sister

If Job did speak this way to a **worm**, he would be speaking to something that he knew could not hear and understand him in order to make an emphatic statement. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if I said that I was certainly going to be in a grave" (See: **Apostrophe (p.1139)**)

to the worm

Job is not referring to a specific **worm**. He means any worm. Express this in the way that would be most natural in your language. Alternate translation: "to a worm" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

to the worm

A **worm** is a small, legless creature that burrows through the ground, passing the soil through its digestive system in order to extract the nutrients that the soil contains. Worms also pass whatever else they find underground through their digestive systems, including dead bodies. If your readers would not be familiar with what a worm is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable creature in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “to a small burrowing creature” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 17:15

where then {would be} my hope? And my hope, who would see it

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "then I would not have any real hope! No, I would not have any hope that anyone could see!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

where then {would be} my hope? And my hope, who would see it

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hope**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "then I would not really have anything to hope for! No, I would not have anything to hope for that anyone could see!" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 17:16

Will they descend to the bars of Sheol? If {our} rest {will be} together in the dust

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Then they would descend to the bars of Sheol! Then our rest would be together in the dust!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Will they descend

The pronoun **they** refers to the hope that Job described in the previous verse. Job may be using a plural term to speak of the hope that he said would not be and the hope that he said no one would see, even though this is basically the same hope. If it would be more natural in your language, you could use a singular pronoun in your translation. Alternate translation: "Will it descend" or, as a statement, "Then it would descend" (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

to the bars of Sheol

Job is using the term **bars** to mean "gates," by association with the way that bars keep a gate locked. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to the gates of Sheol" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

to the bars of Sheol

Job means implicitly that if his hope went down to the **bars** or gates of Sheol, it would be admitted there. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "to Sheol and be admitted there" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

If {our} rest {will be} together in the dust

When Job speaks of having **rest** in the **dust**, he means having died. This is a poetic way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "Will we die together" or "Will my hope die with me" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

If {our} rest {will be} together in the dust

Job is speaking of his hope as if it were a living thing that could have **rest**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Do I have nothing more to hope for in this life" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 18

Job 18 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

In this chapter, Job's friend Bildad speaks to him for a second time. As Eliphaz did in his second speech to Job in chapter 15, Bildad speaks more strongly to Job in this speech than he did in his first speech. Using much of the same language that Job used in chapters 16 and 17, Bildad defends himself and the other two friends and warns Job that God will punish him severely if he continues to be wicked (as Bildad believes him to be).

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Job 18:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 18:2

Until when will you make ends of words

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should make an end of words right now!" or "It is not helpful for you to keep saying such things!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Until when will you make ends of words

Bildad is using the term **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Bildad is answering Job by using the same language that Job used in 16:3. See how you translated the expression "an end to words" there; **ends of words** here is a slight variation. Alternate translation: "For how long will you keep talking" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

will you make & Consider

The pronoun **you** and the implied "you" in the imperative **Consider** are plural. Bildad may be using these plural forms because he is answering Job in his own words and Job addressed "all of you" (meaning his three friends) when he asked in 16:3[../16/03.md], "Is there an end to words of wind?" Bildad could be portraying Job as representative of a group of people who think and speak as he does. If your language marks a distinction between singular and plural "you," it may be more natural to use singular forms in your translation. (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 18:3

Why are we regarded as beasts, as if we are stupid in your eyes

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "We should not be regarded as beasts, stupid in your eyes!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why are we regarded as beasts

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Why do you regard us as beasts" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

as beasts

Bildad is using this comparison to say that just as **beasts** have no understanding, so Job regards his friends as having no understanding. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "as beasts that have no understanding" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

in your eyes

Bildad is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. Sight, in turn, represents attention, perspective, and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from your perspective" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

in your eyes

The word **your** is plural here, like the word "you" in the previous verse. Since Bildad is addressing Job, it may be more natural to use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 18:4

The one tearing himself in his nose

Bildad is speaking about Job in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: “You who tear yourself in your nose” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

The one tearing himself in his nose

Bildad is continuing to answer Job in his own words. In [16:9](#), Job spoke as if God were literally a wild animal that had **torn** him in his anger. Bildad is saying that it is actually Job who is tearing himself apart in his own anger. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “It is you who are tearing yourself apart in your anger” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

will the earth be forsaken for your sake, or will the rock move from its place

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “The earth will not be forsaken for your sake, and the rock will not move from its place!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

will the earth be forsaken

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “will people forsake the earth” or “will people stop living on the earth” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

or will the rock move from its place

Bildad is continuing to answer Job in his own words. In [14:18-19](#), Job said to God, “you destroy the hope of man,” and he compared that to the way “a rock moves from its place.” This could be a reference to an earthquake or a landslide. Bildad is implying that Job is being overly grandiose by comparing his individual situation with great natural events. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “It is not as if your individual situation is a great earthquake!” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 18:5

the light of the wicked goes out; the flame of his fire will not shine

Bildad is speaking of the happiness and prosperity of a wicked person as if those things were literally a **light** or **flame**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “any happiness or prosperity that wicked people enjoy will not last for very long” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the wicked

Bildad is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” or, since Bildad uses the singular **his** later in the verse, “a wicked person” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 18:6

The light in his tent will be dark, and his lamp will go out above him

Bildad is continuing to speak of the happiness and prosperity of a wicked person as if those things were literally a **light** or **lamp**. He is also continuing to answer Job in his own words. In [17:12](#), Job said that his friends were telling him that light must be near because it was presently so dark in his life. Bildad is saying here in response that wicked people may be in the light, but soon it will become dark for them. To help make this clear to your readers, it may be helpful to use the same language here that you used in [17:12](#). Alternate translation: “Even though a wicked person may have light, darkness is near” or “Even though a wicked person may experience prosperity, soon he will have trouble instead” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 18:7

The steps of his strength will shorten

Bildad is using one sign of weakness, a shortening stride, to indicate weakness in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He will become weak" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

The steps of his strength

Bildad is using this possessive form to speak of **steps** that are characterized by **strength**. It may be more natural for you to express this meaning using a form other than a possessive. Alternate translation: "His vigorous stride" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

and his plan will cast him down

Bildad is speaking of a **plan** that a wicked person might make as if it were a living thing that could **cast him down**, that is, throw him or make him fall onto the ground. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and his schemes will only harm him in the end" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 18:8

he will be cast into a net by his feet, and he will wander into a pitfall

Bildad is speaking as if a wicked person would literally be caught in a **net** or **pitfall**. He means that such a person will experience troubles that will keep him from fulfilling his plans. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he will experience troubles that will keep him from fulfilling his plans” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he will be cast into a net by his feet

Bildad is speaking of the **feet** of a wicked person as if they were a living thing that could **cast** him **into a net**. The implication seems to be that if the feet of the wicked person, rather than his eyes and his mind, are determining where he is going, he will walk into dangers unawares. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he will walk unawares into a net” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

a pitfall

A **pitfall** is a type of trap for animals. To make it, people dig a pit in the ground and cover it with netting. They then put plant materials all over the netting to make it appear that the ground above the pit is just ordinary ground. If your readers would not be familiar with what a pitfall is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “a concealed trap” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 18:9

A snare will seize {him} by the heel; a trap will hold onto him

Bildad is continuing to speak of a wicked person as if he would literally be caught in a **snare** or **trap**. If you decided in the previous verse to express the meaning of this image rather than retain it in your translation, you could restate the meaning here. Alternate translation: "Yes, a wicked person will not be able to succeed; he will fail because of all the trouble that he causes for himself" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

A snare will seize {him} by the heel

A **snare** was a device that people in this culture used to catch birds. It consisted of a loose loop of cord. A hunter would put seeds or other bait inside the loop. When a bird came inside the loop to eat the bait, the hunter would pull on the cord and catch the bird by its feet. A snare might also have a mechanism that a bird would trigger automatically by stepping inside the loop. Bildad is speaking as if this would happen to a wicked person, so that he would be caught **by the heel**. If your readers would not be familiar with what a snare is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "He will step into a device that will seize his foot" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

a trap

By **trap**, Bildad means some other device for catching birds or animals. Interpreters are unsure exactly what this device is. The word Bildad uses suggests the idea of braiding, and so this could be a net of some kind. Alternate translation: "a net" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 18:10

His rope is hidden in the ground, and his trap for him {on} the path

Bildad is continuing to speak of a wicked person as if he would literally be caught by a **rope** or **trap**. If you decided in the previous two verses to express the meaning of this image rather than retain it in your translation, you could restate the meaning in another way here. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

His rope & and his trap for him

In these possessive forms, **His** and **his** are the objects rather than the subjects of **rope** and **trap**. That is, Bildad is not speaking of a rope and trap that the wicked person owns but of a rope and trap that will catch the wicked person. Alternate translation: "The rope that will catch him ... and the trap that will catch him is hidden" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

His rope is hidden in the ground

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "The ground is concealing the rope that will catch him" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

His rope

By **rope**, Bildad means some further device for catching birds or animals. He seems to mean some larger device for catching animals that would work the same way as a "snare" that catches birds. A hunter might hide a loop of rope **in the ground** and pull on the rope to catch an animal once it stepped inside the loop. Alternate translation: "a loop of rope to catch him" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

and his trap for him {on} the path

Bildad is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and a trap is hidden for him on the path" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and his trap

It is unclear whether Bildad is talking about a specific type of **trap** here. He may be using a general term for any device that would catch a bird or animal. If your language has such a general term, it would be appropriate to use it here in your translation. (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 18:11

and they will chase him at his feet

Bildad is speaking of these **Terrors** as if they were a living thing that could **chase** a wicked person the way a dog or wolf would, nipping at his **feet** to disable him so that he could not run away to safety. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he will not be able to escape from these troubles" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 18:12

His strength becomes hungry

Bildad is speaking of the **strength** of a wicked person as if it were a living thing that could become **hungry**. He means that a wicked person's strength becomes weakened as if by hunger. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He is weakened as if by hunger" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and disaster {is} prepared

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who has done the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "and God has prepared disaster" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

at his side

Bildad is speaking as if **disaster** were literally at the **side** of a wicked person. He means that it will strike him as soon as there is opportunity. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to strike him as soon as there is opportunity" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 18:13

It devours parts of his skin; the firstborn of death devours his parts

The pronoun **It** refers to **the firstborn of death** later in the verse. If it would be clearer in your language, you could put the noun phrase in the first part of the verse and the pronoun in the second part of the verse. Alternate translation: "The firstborn of death devours parts of his skin; it devours his parts" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the firstborn of death

The expression **the firstborn of death** means the strongest kind of death or a terrible kind of death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "a deadly disease" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

his parts

Since the pronoun **his** in this possessive form refers to the wicked person as a whole, it is likely that the word **parts** describes his arms and his legs. Alternate translation: "his arms and his legs" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 18:14

He is pulled & and one marches him

If terror is indeed the agent that Bildad says pulls the wicked person from his tent, then Bildad is speaking of terror as if it were a living thing that could do this. He actually means that the disasters that cause a wicked person to feel terror also deprive him of safety and security. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “The disasters that cause him to feel terror take him away ... and they march him” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

He is pulled

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, from the context it appears that this may be terror itself, since terror seems to be personified in the second part of the verse. Alternate translation: “Terror pulls him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and one marches him to the king of terrors

The pronoun **one** probably refers to terror. The pronoun is feminine, as is the word “terror;” and Hebrew speakers sometimes used feminine pronouns to represent feminine subjects they had not yet named but which they had in mind. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “and terror marches him to its king” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and one marches him to the king of terrors

If the pronoun **one** does refer to terror, then Bildad is speaking of terror as if it were a living thing, a soldier, who could march a captured enemy to his **king** as a prisoner. Once again Bildad would be using terror to mean the disasters that cause a wicked person to feel terror. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the disasters that cause him to feel terror bring him to the king of terrors” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and one marches him to the king of terrors

Like the expression “the firstborn of death” in the previous verse, the expression **the king of terrors** here is a superlative. It means the worst terror there is, specifically, death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the disasters that cause him to feel terror ultimately cause him to die” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 18:15

One will dwell in his tent

The pronoun **One** is feminine in this verse, as in the previous verse, and so it may refer once again to terror. (However, interpreters have a range of understandings of what this verse means.) Alternate translation: "Terror will dwell in his tent" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

which is} not to him

Bildad means implicitly that the **tent** will no longer belong to the wicked person, probably because he will be dead (a prisoner of the "king of terrors," death, as the previous verse describes). You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "which will be abandoned because he is dead" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

sulfur is scattered upon his home

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "God scatters sulfur upon his home" or "God destroys his home by raining burning sulfur on it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 18:16

Below, his roots dry up, and above, his branch withers

Bildad is speaking as if the wicked person were literally a tree that dies from lack of moisture. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He fails in every aspect of life and finally he dies" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

his branch withers

Bildad is not referring to a specific **branch**. He means every branch on the tree that he is using to symbolize the wicked person. If you retain the image in your translation, it may be more natural in your language to use a plural form. Alternate translation: "his branches wither" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 18:17

His memory

Bildad is using this possessive form to mean other people's **memory** of the wicked person, not the wicked person's memory of things. Alternate translation: "The memory of him" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

from the earth

Bildad is using the term **earth** by association to mean the people who live on the earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from among the people who live on the earth" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

name

Here, **name** represents a person's fame and reputation. Alternate translation: "reputation" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

upon the face of the land

Bildad is speaking as if the surface of the land or ground were literally its **face**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "upon the surface of the land" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 18:18

They will drive him from light into darkness

The pronoun **They** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be more natural in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "He will be driven from light into darkness" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

They will drive him from light into darkness

Bildad is using the term **light** to represent life and the term **darkness** to represent death. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He will be driven from among the living into the abode of the dead" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and they will chase him from the world

The pronoun **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "yes, he will be chased from the world" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 18:19

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 18:20

The ones after will wonder at his day, and the ones before will seize horror

Bildad is using two groups of people to mean all people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. This could mean: (1) people who live after God punishes the wicked person and people who were alive beforehand and recognized that God would punish the wicked person. Alternate translation: "The way God punishes him will make a great impression on everyone who ever hears of him" (2) people who live to the west of the wicked person and people who live to the east of the wicked person. Alternate translation: "The way God punishes him will make a great impression on the people who live all around him" (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

The ones after & and the ones before

If Bildad is speaking of people who live **after** and **before** God punishes the wicked person, then he is using those adjectives as nouns to mean certain groups of people. The ULT adds the word **ones** in each case to suggest this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "Those who live after him ... and those who see what is going to happen to him" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

his day

Bildad is using the term **day** to mean what happens to the wicked person at a particular time, the time when God punishes him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what happens to him when God punishes him" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

will seize horror

Bildad is speaking as if **horror** were literally an object that people could **seize**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "will become horrified" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 18:21

Surely these {are} the dwellings of the wicked, and this {is} the place of one {who} does not know God

Bildad is speaking as if all the misfortunes he has described were literally the **dwellings** of wicked people, the **place** where they live. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “this is what will happen to the wicked, yes, this is the fate of one who does not know God” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the wicked

Bildad is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 19

Job 19 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is Job's response to Bildad's second speech. It is structured as a chiasm. (See the discussion of that poetic form in the General Introduction to Job.) - Verses 1–7: Job rebukes his friends for not being sympathetic to him. - Verses 8–11: Job uses images to describe how God has made him suffer. - Verses 13–19: Job describes how his family and friends have abandoned him. - Verses 20–21: Job uses images to describe how God has made him suffer. - Verse 22: Job rebukes his friends for not being sympathetic to him. - Verses 23–24: Job wishes that people would hear his defense and he foresees that God will vindicate him.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Job's Faith

In verses 25–27, Job shows the great depth of his faith in God even after suffering so much. Job believes that even if God is treating him unfairly now, God will ultimately do the right thing. Job does not understand that God is actually not treating him unfairly. But the faith and confidence that he nevertheless has in God are remarkable. (See: **faith (p.1308)**)

Job 19:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 19:2

Until when will you afflict my soul and crush me with words

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You have afflicted my soul and crushed me with words for long enough!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

will you afflict & and crush me

The word **you** is plural here and through verse 5 because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

my soul

Job is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "me" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and crush me with words

Job is speaking as if his friends could literally **crush** him with their **words**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and discourage me deeply with your words" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

with words

Job is using the term **words** to mean what his friends have been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "by what you have been saying" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 19:3

ten times

The expression **ten times** means “many times,” not literally ten times, no more and no less. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “many times” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

you are not ashamed, you mistreat me

In this sentence structure, the verb **mistreat** is dependent on the verb **ashamed**. It may be more natural in your language to use a different sentence structure. Alternate translation: “you are not ashamed to mistreat me” (See: **Sentence Structure (p.1285)**)

Job 19:4

my error remains with me

Interpreters are not certain what Job means by this statement. He could mean: (1) that any sin he might have committed would be his own private concern. This would be consistent with his rebuke of his friends for reproaching him publicly as a sinner. Alternate translation: "that would be my own private concern" (2) that he would be the only one who would know for sure whether he had sinned. Alternate translation: "that would be for me to determine" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 19:5

you will exalt yourselves above me and plead my disgrace against me

See how you translated the similar use of the term **exalt** in [17:4](#). Alternate translation: “you want to prove that you are right and I am wrong by appealing to the way that I am suffering” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 19:6

and his net has closed around me

Job is speaking as if a **net** that God had set as a trap had literally **closed around** him. Job is answering Bildad in his own words, but Job is making the net a symbol of the unjust punishment of the innocent rather than of the just punishment of the wicked. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "yes, he has unfairly punished me even though I am innocent" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 19:7

I cry, 'Violence

The expression **Violence!** refers generally to mistreatment, including but not limited to actual violence. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I cry, 'Someone is mistreating me'" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

I cry, 'Violence

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "I protest that someone is mistreating me" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

but I am not answered

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "but no one answers me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

but {there is} no justice

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **justice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "but no one ensures that I am treated justly" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 19:8

He has walled up my way and I do not pass

Job is speaking of his life as if it were a **way** or path that he was walking along, and he is speaking as if God had built a wall to block that path so that he could not continue on it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar image in [3:23](#). Alternate translation: "God has kept me from being able to overcome my troubles and resume my regular life" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he has set darkness upon my paths

In a parallel image, Job is speaking of his activities as if they were **paths** on which he was walking, and he is speaking as if God had made it so dark on those paths that he could not walk on them because he could not see where he was going. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "yes, God has prevented me from knowing the right things to do" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 19:9

He has stripped my glory from upon me

Job is speaking as if the **glory** or honor that he formerly had were literally an article of clothing that God had **stripped** from him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He has taken away the honor that I formerly had" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he has removed the crown of my head

Job is speaking as if he had formerly been wearing an actual **crown**, a symbol of ruling authority, and that God had **removed** that crown from his **head**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "yes, he has deprived me of the authority I once had" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the crown of my head

Job is using this possessive form to speak symbolically of a crown that he once wore on his head. In the context, the phrase **the crown of my head** does not mean the very top of Job's head. Alternate translation: "the crown that I once wore on my head" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 19:10

He has broken me down on every side

Job is speaking as he were literally a building and God had **broken** him **down** completely. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He has destroyed everything in my life" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and I have gone away

Job is speaking as if he has literally **gone away** or left the area where he was formerly living. See how you translated the similar expression in [14:20](#). If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Job is speaking of what he expects to happen imminently as if it had already happened. Alternate translation: "and I am about to die" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he has removed my hope like a tree

Job is using this comparison to say that just as a tree will not grow again once it has been completely uprooted, so he believes that God has taken away his hope forever. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "and he has taken away my hope forever, just as an uprooted tree will never grow back" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and he has removed my hope like a tree

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hope**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and he has kept me from ever hoping again, just as an uprooted tree will never grow back" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 19:11

And he has kindled his nose against me

Job is speaking as if God had literally **kindled** his anger or set it on fire. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And he has allowed himself to become very angry with me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 19:12

His troops come together, and they build up their ramps against me, and they encamp around my tent

Job is speaking as if he were literally a city and God had sent **troops** to lay siege to that city, building **ramps** by which they could get over its walls. Job is likely speaking of the troubles he is experiencing as if they were soldiers whom God had sent to attack him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God has made me experience many kinds of troubles, and they are causing me more and more distress" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and they encamp around my tent

Job continues the military image but changes it slightly when he speaks as if he were literally a **tent** around which an enemy army had encamped. Job may be picturing himself as one of a number of soldiers who are all staying in tents but whose camp an enemy army has surrounded. Or Job may be using the word **tent** simply to mean the place where he lives, that is, his life. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "yes, I am experiencing troubles in many different aspects of my life" (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

Job 19:13

He has put my brothers far from me

Job is speaking as if God had removed his **brothers** to a distance from him. Job is actually speaking of the diminished quality of the relationship he now has with them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He has caused my brothers to withdraw from me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

my brothers

Job is probably using the word **brothers** to mean close relatives, both male and female, who may not literally be his siblings. Your language may use that word or an equivalent term in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in plain language. Alternate translation: "my close relatives" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and my acquaintances indeed have turned away from me

Job is speaking as if his **acquaintances** had literally **turned away** from him, that is, turned to face in another direction so that they could not see him or turned and walked away from him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and my acquaintances now act as if they do not even know me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 19:14

and my familiar friends have forgotten me

Job is speaking as if his **familiar friends** had literally **forgotten** him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "act as if they never knew me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 19:15

Guests of my house

Job is using this possessive form to refer to people who have stayed in his **house** as **Guests**. Alternate translation: "People who once stayed in my house as guests" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

in their eyes

Job is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. Sight, in turn, represents attention, perspective, and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from their perspective" or "as far as they are concerned" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 19:16

I call to my servant, but he does not answer

In this context, the word **call** implicitly means “summon” and the word **answer** implicitly means “obey.” You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “I summon my servant, but he does not obey and come to me” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

to my servant

Job is not referring to a specific **servant**. He means all of his servants. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “to my servants” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

with my mouth I entreat him

Job is using the term **mouth** to mean by association what he has to say with his mouth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I have to speak pleadingly to him” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 19:17

My breath is strange to my wife

This could mean: (1) that Job is using one part of himself, his **breath**, to mean all of himself. In verses 13–19, Job is talking about how all of his friends and relatives now treat him as if they did not know him. In verses 13 and 15, Job uses words related to the word that the ULT translates as **strange** in this verse. Alternate translation: “I am like a stranger to my wife” (2) that Job is referring literally to his **breath** and saying that because of his sickness, it smells bad and is offensive to his wife. Alternate translation: “Because of my sickness, my breath smells bad and is offensive to my wife” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

though I was gracious to the sons of my womb

Job is the possessive form **of my womb** to mean the womb of his wife. He is speaking of the children that they had together. Alternate translation: “even though we had children together and I treated them kindly” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 19:18

let me arise, and they speak against me

This could mean implicitly: (1) that when Job stands up to speak, younger people who should listen respectfully (see [32:6-7](#)) contradict him instead. Alternate translation: “when I stand up to speak, younger people disrespectfully contradict me” (2) that when Job tries to stand up, struggling because of his sickness, children make fun of him. Alternate translation: “when I struggle to stand up, they make fun of me” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 19:19

the friends of my counsel

Job is using this possessive form to describe the **friends** with whom he took **counsel**, that is, the friends with whom he shared his private thoughts and whose advice he asked. Alternate translation: “the friends in whom I confided” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

have been turned against me

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “have turned against me” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 19:20

My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh

Job is not referring to a specific **bone**. He means all of his bones. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "My bones cling to my skin and to my flesh" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh

Job is speaking of this representative **bone** as if it were living thing that could **cling** to his **skin** and **flesh**. He means that his bones are right next to his skin and flesh, that is, all of the muscle in between has wasted away. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am just skin and bones" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and I have escaped with the skin of my teeth

Job is speaking as if he had barely **escaped** from some disaster, and he is describing what he was able to escape with. Interpreters have different ideas about what he is describing, but they generally agree that it means something insignificant. Alternate translation: "and there is practically nothing left of me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 19:21

Pity me, pity me

Job is repeating the verb **Pity** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: "Please have pity on me" (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

the hand of God has touched me

Here the **hand of God** represents the power and activity of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God is powerfully afflicting me" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 19:22

Why do you pursue me as God {would}? And will you not be satisfied with my flesh

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You should not pursue me as God would! You should be satisfied with my flesh!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why do you pursue me as God {would}

The point of this comparison is that just as God would **pursue** someone relentlessly to make sure that sin was punished appropriately, so Job's friends have been relentlessly insisting that he has sinned. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "Why do you insist relentlessly that I have sinned" or, as a statement, "You should not insist relentlessly that I have sinned" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

And will you not be satisfied with my flesh

Job is likely alluding to a popular expression. In this culture, if someone accused another person maliciously, people said that he was "eating the pieces" of that person. Job is suggesting that his friends are "eating" him in this sense (that is, accusing him maliciously) and they are not yet **satisfied** with the amount of his **flesh** that they have "eaten." If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And will you never stop accusing me maliciously" or, as a statement, "Yes, you should stop accusing me so maliciously" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 19:23

Who will give {that} now my words will be written down? Who will give {that} they will be inscribed on a scroll

See how you translated the expression **Who will give** in 11:5-6. Alternate translation: "I wish that my words would now be written down! I wish that they would be inscribed on a scroll!" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Who will give {that} now my words will be written down? Who will give {that} they will be inscribed on a scroll

In context, Job is suggesting that this is actually unlikely, even though he wishes that it could happen. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "It is unfortunate that my words cannot be written down. It is unfortunate that they cannot be inscribed on a scroll" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

my words will be written down

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "someone will write down my words" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

my words

Job is using the term **words** to mean what he has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what I have been saying" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

they will be inscribed on a scroll

Job is speaking as if he wanted his **words** literally to be **inscribed** or engraved on a **scroll**. He could mean: (1) that he wants someone to record them meticulously on a scroll. Alternate translation: "they will be recorded on a scroll" (2) that he wants someone to engrave them onto a copper sheet. Alternate translation: "they will be inscribed on a copper sheet" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they will be inscribed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "someone will inscribe them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 19:24

With a stylus of iron

A **stylus** was an iron tool that people in this culture used to engrave writing onto hard surfaces. They would strike the stylus with another tool such as a hammer in order to remove tiny pieces of the surface a little at a time in order to create letters. For better visibility, they would sometimes then fill these letters with lead, which is a soft metal that they could pound into shape. If your readers would not be familiar with what a stylus is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "With a small iron tool cutting tool" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 19:25

But I know {that

Job is using the word translated **But** to draw a contrast between what he has just suggested is unlikely, that his claims of innocence will be recorded for posterity, and something that he is very confident about, that his **redeemer** will ultimately vindicate him as innocent. In your translation, you may wish to introduce this verse in a way that will indicate this contrast more explicitly. Alternate translation: “But even though it is unlikely that my claims of innocence will be recorded for posterity, I still know that” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

But I know {that

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the word translated **know**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “But I know very well {that}” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

my redeemer lives

Job means implicitly that even though he expects to die, his **redeemer** will still be alive to vindicate him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “even though I expect to die soon, my redeemer will still be alive” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

my redeemer

A **redeemer** was a close relative who would take responsibility to do whatever was necessary to help another family member who was threatened or in need. Your language and culture may have a name for a person who fulfills this role, and you could use that name in your translation. You could also use a general expression. Alternate translation: “the close relative who will vindicate me” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

my redeemer

As Job indicates in the next verse, he believes that God will be his **redeemer**. This is similar to the way that Job speaks in **16:19** of having an “advocate” in heaven and to the way that he asks God in **17:3** to be his “surety.” Since Job speaks of God in the next verse, you do not need to explain in this verse that God is the **redeemer** whom Job is expecting. It may even be that Job wishes to generate some suspense and attention by not naming the redeemer right away, and it would be good to give your readers that same experience. (See: **When to Keep Information Implicit (p.1305)**)

and {that at} the last

Job is using the adjective **last** as a noun to mean a certain time. This could mean: (1) a “later” time, after Job has died. Alternate translation: “after I have died” (2) that Job is the “last” time, the time at the end of the world. Alternate translation: “and that at the end of the world” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

he will stand

In this culture, people stood up when they were about to speak. This was a symbolic action by which they indicated that they had something important to say. Standing up commanded the attention of the people they wanted to

listen to them. In this context, the important thing that the redeemer had to say would be that Job was innocent. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "he will stand and speak in my defense" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

upon the dust

Job is using the term **dust** by association to mean the earth, on whose surface there is dust. This may also be a poetic allusion to the fact that Job would be dead and at "rest" in the "dust," as he said in [17:16](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "upon the earth" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 19:26

and {that} after my skin, they strike this off

The pronoun **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: “and that after my skin has been stricken off” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and {that} after my skin, they strike this off

Job is speaking as if someone or something might literally **strike** the **skin** off his bones. He could mean: (1) that his body will decay so that only the bones are left. Alternate translation: “and that even after my body decays so that only the bones are left” (2) that worms, such as he mentioned in [17:14](#), will eat the skin off his bones. Alternate translation: “and that even after worms eat the skin off my bones” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

yet from my flesh

Job could be saying that he will **behold God**: (1) from the vantage point of his flesh, that is, from within his body. This would be an implicit expression of faith and confidence in the resurrection of the body. Alternate translation: “yet from my resurrected body” (2) apart from his flesh, that is, as a spirit after death. Alternate translation: “yet as a spirit after death” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I will behold God

As the General Notes to chapter 13 discuss, in this culture, a subject would be able to look a sovereign in the face if the sovereign favored that subject. Job seems to be alluding here to that cultural norm. The implication is that God will no longer consider him guilty but acknowledge that he was innocent all along. Job indicates in the previous verse that God will also acknowledge his innocence publicly to everyone on earth. Alternate translation: “I will be able to look God in the face because he will affirm that I am innocent” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 19:27

I will behold for myself and my eyes will see

These two phrases mean similar things. Job is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "I myself will see very clearly" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

I will behold

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **will behold**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: "I will certainly behold" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and my eyes will see

Job is using one part of himself, his **eyes**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "and see with my own eyes" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and not a stranger

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. In this context, the word **stranger** means "someone else." But it is also an allusion to what Job said in verse 15, that people who knew him now regard him as a "stranger." Alternate translation: "and it will not be someone else who beholds him" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

My kidneys fail within my belly

Here, the **kidneys** represents the emotions. Job is saying that he is overcome with emotion at the thought of seeing God. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am overcome with emotion at this thought" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 19:28

If you say, 'How we will persecute him! For the root of the matter is found in me

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "If you say that you are still going to persecute me because you believe that the root of the matter is found in me" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

you say

The word **you** is plural here because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

For the root of the matter

Job is saying that his friends might speak as if his situation were literally a plant that had a **root**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "For the cause of the problem" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

in me

Job seems to begin this hypothetical saying of the three friends as a direct quotation but finish it as an indirect quotation, saying **in me** rather than "in him." It may be more natural in your language to finish the quotation as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "in him" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Job 19:29

of the face of the sword

Here the word **face** represents the presence of someone or something by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: “of the presence of the sword” (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

of the face of the sword

Job is using one kind of severe punishment, execution by a **sword**, to mean severe punishment in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “that God may punish you severely” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

from} wrath {is} the punishment of the sword

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wrath**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “when God becomes angry at people for being wicked, God punishes them severely” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

that there is judgment

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgment**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “that God punishes wickedness justly” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 20

Job 20 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the second speech of Job's friend Zophar. In this chapter, Zophar speaks more strongly to Job than he did the first time spoke to him.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Zophar answering Job with his own words

In [7:8](#), as Job was appealing to God, he said, "The eye of the one seeing me will not regard me; your eyes will be on me, but I will not exist." Zophar says in [20:9](#) about the wicked person, "The eye that saw him will not continue." Job said in [7:10](#) of himself as a mortal person, "He will not return again to his house, and his place will not know him again." Zophar says of the wicked person in [20:9](#), "his place will no longer observe him." In both instances Zophar is suggesting that Job himself is a wicked person, using Job's own words.

Similarly, Zophar says in [20:27](#) of the wicked person that "the heavens will reveal his iniquity, and the earth will raise itself up against him" as a witness. In [16:18](#), Job called upon the earth to see that he received justice, and in [16:19](#), Job said that he had an advocate in the heavens. So Zophar is likely answering Job once again in his own words, implying that Job himself is a wicked person of the type that he has been describing in his speech.

To help your readers appreciate how Zophar is answering Job with his own words, you may wish to translate what Zophar says in these instances similarly to the way you translated what Job said earlier.

Indelicate images that Zophar uses

As noted above, Zophar speaks strongly to Job in this speech. He uses a couple of images drawn from bodily functions that people in your culture might consider indelicate to include in a Bible translation. If so, you could use comparable images. Zophar says in [20:7](#) of the wicked person, "he will perish forever like his dung." You could refer to something else that disappears completely, saying, for example, "he will perish forever like the dust that the wind blows away." Zophar says of the wicked person in [20:15](#), "He swallows wealth, but he will vomit it." You might say instead something such as, "Though he may become rich, he will lose all his money."

Job 20:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 20:2

Therefore

Zophar is using the word **Therefore** to introduce the reason he is about to give for why he is speaking to Job again. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "This is why" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

my thoughts turn me back

Zophar is speaking of his **thoughts** as if they were a living thing that could **turn** him **back**, that is, make him turn around and return to Job as if he had left him. He means that he wants to speak to Job again and share what he is thinking in response to what Job has just said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I need to speak to you again and tell you what I am thinking" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

because of my urgency in me

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: "because I feel such urgency" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

Job 20:3

a rebuke of dishonor to me

Zophar is using this possessive form to describe a **rebuke** that he feels has brought **dishonor** to him. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “a rebuke that dishonors me” (See: **Possession (p. 1261)**)

but a spirit from my understanding answers me

Zophar is speaking as if there were a **spirit** in his **understanding** that could **answer** him, that is, show him how to respond to Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “but I have had a good idea that enables me to understand how I should respond” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 20:4

Do you {not} know this from long ago, from the placing of man upon the earth

Zophar is using the question form for emphasis. (The question continues into the next verse.) If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Surely you are aware of this from long ago, from the placing of man upon the earth" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Do you {not} know this from long ago, from the placing of man upon the earth

Zophar is speaking as if Job himself should have known **from long ago** what he is about to say. He means that Job is one member of the human community that has known this for as long as it has existed. As a member of that community, Job should know it because it has been passed down to him through traditional wisdom. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Surely you are aware of this traditional wisdom that we have received from our earliest ancestors" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

from the placing of man upon the earth

Zophar is using one thing that God did when he created people, **placing** them on the **earth**, to mean all that God did in creating people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "ever since God created man" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

from the placing of man upon the earth

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "ever since God created people" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 20:5

that the triumph of the wicked {is} from near, and the joy of the godless {is} for a moment

In this verse, Zophar completes the question that he began in the previous verse, using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “that the triumph of the wicked {is} from near, and the joy of the godless {is} for a moment!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the wicked

Zophar is using the adjective **wicked**, which is plural, as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

is} from near

Zophar is using this expression to mean that the **triumph** of the **wicked** does not extend very far. He means that it does not extend very far in time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “does not last very long” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the godless

Job is using the adjective **godless**, which is singular, as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “the godless person” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the godless

Zophar is not referring to a specific **godless** person. He means all godless people. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “godless people” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 20:6

Though his height rises to the skies and his head reaches to the cloud

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person might literally become so tall that his head would be at the same level as **cloud** in the **skies**. He means that a wicked person might become very prosperous and powerful. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Though a wicked person may become very prosperous and powerful" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to the cloud

Zophar is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means the many clouds that appear in the sky. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "to the clouds" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 20:7

like his dung

The point of this comparison may be the one that Zophar makes explicitly, that a wicked person will perish **forever** as **dung** perishes forever. However, the point of the comparison could also be that just as people consider **dung** a loathsome substance and dispose of it, people will consider a wicked person to be loathsome and not commemorate him in any way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “and no one will commemorate him, because they consider him so loathsome” (See: **Simile (p. 1287)**)

will say, ‘Where {is he

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “will ask where he has gone” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Where {is he

The people who are asking about the wicked person are using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “He is gone completely!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 20:8

He will fly away

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person would literally **fly away**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “He will vanish” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

like a dream

The point of this comparison is that just as when a **dream** ends, the person who had the dream realizes that it was not real, so it will be as if the wicked person had never existed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “as if he had never existed” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and they will not find him

They is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: “and no one will be able to find him” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and he will be chased away

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “he will flee” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and he will be chased away

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person would literally **be chased away** or flee. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he will vanish” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 20:9

The eye {that} saw him will not continue

Zophar is using one part of a person, his **eye**, to mean all of that person in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Anyone who previously saw him will not continue to see him" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and his place will no longer observe him

As Job did in [7:10](#), Zophar is speaking here of a person's **place** of residence as if it were a living thing that could **observe** that person. The idea is that the place where the person once lived will not have occasion to observe him again because he will never return to that place. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he will no longer live in his former place of residence" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 20:10

His children will recompense the poor, and his hands will return his wealth

You may find it more natural to put the information about what a wicked person will have to do while he is still alive before the information about what his children will have to do after he dies. Alternate translation: “His hands will return his wealth, and his children will recompense the poor” (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

and his hands will return his wealth

Zophar is using one part of a wicked person, his **hands**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he will return his wealth” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and his hands will return his wealth

The implication is that this is **wealth** that a wicked person obtained fraudulently or by oppression and that he has been required to **return**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and he will have to return the wealth that he obtained fraudulently and by oppression” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 20:11

His bones are full of

Zophar is using one part of a wicked person, his **bones**, to mean his whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "His body is full" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

but it will lie down with him in the dust

Zophar is using the phrase **lie down ... in the dust** to mean "die." This is a poetic way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "but it will die with him" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

but it will lie down with him in the dust

Zophar is speaking of the **vigor** of a wicked person as if it were a living thing that could **lie down in the dust** or die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but he will die while he is still young and strong" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 20:12

wickedness is sweet in his mouth

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person could literally put **wickedness** in his **mouth** and taste it and find it **sweet**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he enjoys wickedness" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

wickedness is sweet in his mouth

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wickedness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "wicked things are sweet in his mouth" or "he enjoys doing wicked things" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

he hides it under his tongue

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person might hide wickedness **under his tongue**. The image is of a person tucking something sweet under his tongue to make it last longer so that he can savor it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he savors it" or "he savors doing wicked things" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 20:13

he has pity on it and does not forsake it

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person would literally have **pity** on wickedness and **not forsake it**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he is reluctant to let it go” or “he is reluctant to stop doing wicked things” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

but keeps it in the midst of his palate

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person would literally hold wickedness against the roof of his mouth so that he could savor it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “but continues to savor it” or “but continues to savor doing them” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 20:14

his food changes in his bowels; it becomes} the bitterness of asps inside him

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person literally eats wickedness and that it turns into **the bitterness of asps** (that is, the poison of those snakes) when he starts to digest it. Zophar means, within the context of the image, that the wicked person gets a painfully upset stomach. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the consequences of his wicked actions turn out to be very unpleasant, and he suffers greatly from them" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it becomes} the bitterness of asps

The term **asps** describes a certain type of poisonous snake. If this snake, or snakes in general, would not be familiar to your readers, you could use a general term. Alternate translation: "it becomes snake poison" or "it becomes reptile poison" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 20:15

He swallows wealth, but he will vomit it; God will expel it from his belly

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person would literally swallow **wealth** but then **vomit** it back up again, and as if God would literally **expel it** or force it out of **his belly**, presumably by causing him to vomit. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He is greedy to become rich, but he will lose all his money; God will cause him to lose it" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 20:16

He will suck the poison of asps

Zophar is speaking as if a wicked person would literally **suck** the **poison of asps**. This could mean: (1) that Zophar is alluding to the images in verses 12 and 13 of a wicked person savoring wickedness as if it were something he held under his tongue or against the roof of his mouth. Zophar would be saying that the delicacy that the wicked person savors or sucks turns out to be poison, meaning something that will kill him. Alternate translation: "In the end, the wickedness that he savors will kill him" (2) that an asp will bite the wicked person and he will absorb its **poison** as if he had sucked it in. This would be a more general statement. Alternate translation: "Something deadly will destroy him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the tongue of the viper will kill him

Zophar may be reflecting a belief of his culture that the forked tongue of a snake was sharp and that snakes injected poison into people and animals by piercing them with their tongues. If Zophar understood, as people today now understand, that snakes inject their poison through their fangs after biting their victims, then Zophar would be using the term **tongue** by association to mean the mouth and thus the fangs. Alternate translation: "the fangs of the viper will kill him" or "a viper will kill him by biting him and injecting him with poison through his fangs" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

asps; & the viper

See how you translated the word "asps" in in 20:14. A **viper** is another kind of poisonous snake. If these snakes, or snakes in general, would not be familiar to your readers, you could use general terms. Alternate translation: "snakes ... the poisonous snake" or "reptiles ... the poisonous reptile" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

the viper

Zophar is not referring to a specific **viper**. He means one that might bite a wicked person. Alternate translation: "a viper" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 20:17

the streams, the rivers of torrents of honey and butter

Zophar is speaking as if **streams**, **rivers**, and **torrents** could literally flow with **honey** and **butter**. He is referring to the abundant quantities of these things with which God would bless a righteous person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the abundant quantities of honey and butter with which God blesses righteous people” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the streams, the rivers of torrents of honey and butter

Zophar is using two agricultural products, **honey** and **butter**, to mean agricultural products in general and thus, in this culture, wealth in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the abundant wealth with which God blesses righteous people” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the streams, the rivers of torrents of

The terms **streams**, **rivers**, and **torrents** mean similar things. Zophar is using the three terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “the deeply flowing streams of” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 20:18

his} gain

It is clear from the next verse, as well as from v. 10, that by **gain** here, Zophar implicitly means money that a wicked person has made by dishonest means. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "his ill-gotten gain" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 20:19

the poor

Zophar is using the adjective **poor** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “poor people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and he did not build it

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this as a positive expression. Alternate translation: “that someone else built” or “that belonged to someone else” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 20:20

he has not known satisfaction in his belly

Here, the **belly** or stomach represents a person's desires, and specifically in this context, greedy desires. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he has not experienced the satisfaction of his greedy desires" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he has not known satisfaction in his belly

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **satisfaction**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "he could never satisfy his greedy desires" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

he will not rescue {any} desired {thing} of his

Zophar is using the adjective **desired** as a noun to mean a certain kind of thing. The ULT adds the word **thing** to show that. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "he will not rescue any of the things that he desired" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

he will not rescue {any} desired {thing} of his

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this with a positive expression. Alternate translation: "he will lose all of the things that he desired" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 20:21

There is no remnant for his eating

This could mean implicitly: (1) Alternate translation: "There is nothing left after he has eaten" (2) Alternate translation: "There is nothing left for him to eat" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 20:22

In the filling of his wealth

Zophar is speaking of the **wealth** of a wicked person as if he were a container that could become full. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Even if he becomes very wealthy," (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it will become narrow to him

Zophar is using this expression to mean that the wicked person will experience great distress. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "he will be in dire straits" or "he will experience great distress" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

every hand of the troubling will come against him

Zophar is using the adjective **troubling** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "the hand of every person who causes trouble will come against him" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

every hand of the troubling will come against him

Here, **hand** represents the power and activity of a person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "every person who causes trouble will work against him" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

every hand of the troubling will come against him

Zophar says **every** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "people who cause trouble will work against him" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 20:23

He will be {about} to fill his belly, he will send the burning of his nose against him, and he will rain {it} upon him in his eating

The pronoun **He** at the start of this verse, the two instances of **him**, and the second instance of **his** refer to the wicked person, while the two instances of **he** later in the verse and the first instance of **his** refer to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “The wicked person will be about to fill his belly, and God will send the burning of his nose against that wicked person, yes, God will rain it upon that person while that person is eating” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and he will rain {it} upon him

Zophar is speaking as if God would literally make his anger **rain** on a wicked person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, he will punish him severely” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

in his eating

Interpreters are not certain what Zophar means by this expression, which can be translated in various ways. It could mean: (1) Alternate translation: “while he is eating” (2) Alternate translation: “upon his flesh” or “upon his body” (3) Alternate translation: “with his arrows” or “with his weapons” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 20:24

He flees from a weapon of iron, a bow of bronze pierces him

Zophar is speaking as if different soldiers were using a **weapon of iron** and a **bow of bronze** to attack the wicked person he is describing. Zophar is using these weapons to represent dangers. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He may escape from one danger, but another danger will overtake him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He flees from a weapon of iron, a bow of bronze pierces him

Since a **bow of bronze** is a more powerful and deadly weapon than a **weapon of iron** such as a sword or spear, Zophar implicitly means that if a wicked person escapes from one danger, a greater danger will overtake him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "He may escape from one danger, but a greater danger will overtake him" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

a bow of bronze

Zophar is using the term **bow** by association to mean an arrow from a bow. If you decide to retain this image in your translation, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "an arrow that someone shoots using a bronze bow" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 20:25

He pulls, and it comes out of his back, and the gleaming goes out of his liver. Terrors {are} upon him

Zophar is continuing to speak as if someone had shot an arrow into the wicked person he is describing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “The wicked person realizes that the danger that has overtaken him is going to destroy him” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and the gleaming

Zophar is using the term **gleaming** by association to mean an arrow whose metal point gleams in the sunlight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the point of the arrow” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Terrors {are} upon him

Zophar could be using the plural form **Terrors** in an intensive sense to mean the worst of terrors, that is, death, as in [18:14](#). Alternate translation: “He is terrified because he realizes that he is going to die” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 20:26

All darkness is hidden

Zophar says **All** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “Great darkness is hidden” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

All darkness is hidden

Zophar is using the term **darkness** to represent troubles. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Great troubles are hidden” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

All darkness is hidden

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who has done the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: “God has hidden great troubles” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

All darkness is hidden

Zophar is speaking as if God had literally **hidden** darkness, representing troubles. He could mean: (1) that God has reserved those troubles to destroy the treasured possessions of the wicked person he is describing. Alternate translation: “God has reserved great troubles” (2) that it is as if those troubles were an animal that had **hidden** itself so that it could pounce on the possessions of the wicked person. Alternate translation: “Great troubles are lying in wait” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

for his treasured {things}

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “for the things that he treasures” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

a fire not blown will devour him

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “a fire that no one has blown on to kindle will devour him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

a fire not blown will devour him

The implication is that no human being will have **blown** on this **fire** to kindle it; God will send the fire. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “A fire that God sends will devour him” or “God will send fire that will devour him” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

a fire not blown will devour him

Zophar is speaking as if **fire** were literally going to **devour** or eat up this wicked person. Within the context of the image, he means that the fire will burn him up, and the image of fire itself represents God destroying the wicked person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God will destroy him” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it will consume the remnant in his tent

Zophar is continuing to speak as if **fire** were literally going to **consume** this wicked person and his possessions. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, God will completely destroy everything in his tent, leaving nothing” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it will consume the remnant in his tent

Zophar is using one possession of this wicked person, the **tent** in which he lives, to mean all of his possessions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, God will completely destroy all of his possessions, leaving nothing” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 20:27

The heavens will reveal his iniquity, and the earth will raise itself up against him

Zophar is speaking as if the **heavens** and the **earth** were living things that could testify against this wicked person. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "If the sky could speak, it would testify that it had observed his iniquity; if the earth could speak, it would raise itself up against him" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and the earth will raise itself up against him

Zophar means that the earth would **raise itself up**, that is, stand up, against this wicked person in order to bring charges against him or to serve as a witness in a legal proceeding. In this culture, in order to begin a case against someone, a person would stand up among those who had gathered in the public square. Someone who had evidence to bring in such a proceeding would similarly stand up. Either way, the earth, Zophar says, would testify that the wicked person was guilty. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "and the earth will stand and bring charges against him" or "and the earth will stand and be a witness against him" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 20:28

The wealth of his house will depart

Zophar is speaking of the **wealth** that the wicked person has in his **house** as if it were a living thing that could **depart**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He will lose the wealth that is in his house" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

flowing away

Zophar is speaking as if the wicked person's **wealth** were a liquid that could literally be **flowing away**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "vanishing" or "being destroyed" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

on the day of his nose

While God would punish the wicked person on a specific **day**, Zophar is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "at the time when God angrily punishes him" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 20:29

This {is} the portion of the wicked man from God, and the heritage of his appointment from God

Zophar is speaking as if God were literally giving a **wicked man** a **portion**, probably meaning a portion of family property, and a **heritage**, similarly meaning an inheritance. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "This is the punishment that the wicked man deserves, and God will punish him in that way" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the wicked man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "the wicked person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

the wicked man

Zophar is not referring to a specific **wicked man** or person. He means wicked people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "wicked people" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and the heritage of his appointment from God

Zophar is using this possessive form to describe a symbolic **heritage** or inheritance that God has appointed to a wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "and his appointed heritage from God" or "and the heritage that God has appointed to him" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 21

Job 21 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is Job's response to Zophar's second speech.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Punishment for the sins of one's parents or ancestors

In the culture in which the book of Job was composed, people commonly believed that God might punish someone for the sins of their parents or ancestors. Job says in verse 19 of this chapter that this is what his three friends believe. However, while people's sins may have consequences for their children and descendants, God does not punish people directly for their parents' or ancestors' sins. Be sure that this is clear in your translation.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

The adjective "wicked" as a noun

In verses 7, 16, 17, and 28, Job uses the adjective "wicked" as a noun to mean wicked people in general. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase such as "wicked people."

Job 21:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 21:2

Hearing, & your consolation

The word **your** and the implied “you” in the imperative **hear** are plural because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

Hearing, hear my words

Job is repeating the verb **hear** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: “Listen carefully to my words” (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

my words

Job is using the term **words** to mean what he is about to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “what I am about to say” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

your consolation

Job is using this possessive form to describe not the **consolation** that his friends will have but the **consolation** that he wants them to offer him. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “the consolation that you offer to me” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 21:3

Tolerate me & you may mock

The implied “you” in the imperative **Tolerate** is plural because Job is addressing his three friends, but the pronoun **you** later in the verse is singular because Job is responding directly to Zophar. Use the corresponding forms in your translation if your language marks a distinction between singular and plural “you.” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

and I will speak

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb **speak**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “and I will take my turn and speak” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

you may mock

For emphasis, Job is saying the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what Job actually means. Alternate translation: “you will probably continue to mock me, even though you should not do so” (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

Job 21:4

is} my complaint to a man

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “my complaint is not to a man!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

is} my complaint to a man

Although the term **man** is masculine, Job does not mean specifically a male human. He is using the term to mean a mortal as opposed to God. Alternate translation: “my complaint is not to a mortal!” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

is} my complaint to a man

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this as a positive expression. Alternate translation: “my complaint is to God!” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

And if

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You could supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. (Some languages may be able to say simply “And if not” to follow up on a question that expects a negative answer.) Alternate translation: “And if my complaint is not to a mortal but to God” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

why may my breath not be short

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “then my breath may certainly be short!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

why may my breath not be short

Job is using his **breath** being **short** (that is, the fact that he is breathing quickly) by association to mean him being upset. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “why may I not be upset” or, as a statement, “then I may certainly be upset!” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 21:5

Look & and lay

The implied “you” in the imperatives **Look** and **lay** is plural because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

and lay the hand upon the mouth

Since Job is speaking to three people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural forms of **hand** and **mouth**. Alternate translation: “and lay your hands upon your mouths” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

and lay the hand upon the mouth

Covering the **mouth** with the **hand** prevents a person from speaking. Job is suggesting that his three friends perform this symbolic action to indicate that his situation is so tragic and distressing that nothing can be said about it. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “and lay your hands upon your mouths to show that my situation is so tragic and distressing that nothing can be said about it” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 21:6

I remember

Job is referring implicitly to when he remembers or is mindful of his sufferings. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I think about my sufferings" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

then I am terrified

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "then that terrifies me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and trembling seizes my flesh

Job is speaking of **trembling** as if it were a living thing that could seize his **flesh**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and my flesh trembles" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and trembling seizes my flesh

Job is using one part of himself, his **flesh**, to mean his whole body. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and my whole body trembles" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 21:7

Why do the wicked live, grow old, and become mighty {in} power

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “The wicked should not live, grow old, and become mighty in power!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the wicked

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, here, as in several other places in the chapter, Job is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 21:8

Their seed is established

Here, **seed** means “children.” Alternate translation: “Their children are established” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Their seed is established

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “Their children grow up” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

to their faces

Here the word **faces** represents the presence of people by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: “in their presence” or “in their homes” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and their descendants to their eyes

Job is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and their descendants in their sight” or “and their descendants where they can see them” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and their descendants to their eyes

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and their descendants grow up where they can see them” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 21:9

Their houses {are} peace

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **peace**, you could express the same idea in another way. In this instance, Job is using an abstract noun with the sense of an adjective. Alternate translation: "Their houses are peaceful" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Their houses

Job could be using the term **houses** by association to mean the households of wicked people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Their households" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and the rod of God {is} not upon them

Job is using the term **rod** by association to mean punishment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as in UST: "and God does not punish them" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 21:10

His bull breeds and it does not fail; his cow calves and it does not miscarry

Although Job uses singular pronouns in this verse, he is not referring to a specific wicked person. He is still speaking of wicked people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express his meaning by using plural pronouns. Alternate translation: "Their bulls breed and they do not fail; their cows calve and they do not miscarry" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 21:11

They send out their babes like a flock

The point of this comparison is that just as shepherds send their flocks out to pasture, so the wicked people whom Job is describing send their young children out to play in the fields around their homes. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "They send their young children out to play in the fields around their homes as if they were a flock of sheep going out to pasture" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

They send out their babes

The implication is that wicked people can **send** their **babes** (young children) out to play because they are safe, as Job says in verse 9. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Because they are so safe, they can allow their young children to play outside" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and their children dance

The implication is that the **children** of wicked people **dance** because they are happy and carefree. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and their children dance because they are happy and carefree" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 21:12

They lift up the tambourine and the harp

The implication is that the children **lift up** these musical instruments in order to play them. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “They play the tambourine and the harp” or “They play tambourines and harps” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

They lift up & and they rejoice

In this verse, the pronouns **They** and **they** refer to the children of wicked people, not to wicked people themselves. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Their children lift up ... and those children rejoice” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the tambourine and the harp, & the flute

Job is not referring to a specific **tambourine** or **harp** or **flute**. He means those musical instruments in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: “tambourines and harps ... flutes” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 21:13

their days

Job is using the term **days** to mean a specific period of time, the lifetime of wicked people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "their lifetime" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

in a moment

The implication is that wicked people do not die a painful, lingering death. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "quickly and painlessly" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 21:14

They say to God, 'Turn away from us, for we do not desire knowledge of your ways

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "They tell God to turn away from them because they do not desire knowledge of his ways" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Turn away from us

The wicked people are speaking as if they wanted God literally to **turn away** from them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Do not be concerned with us" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

for we do not desire knowledge of your ways

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "for we do not want to know your ways" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

your ways

The wicked people are speaking of how God wants people to live as if that were a series of **ways** or paths that God wanted people to walk along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "how you want people to live" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 21:15

Who {is} the Almighty, that we should serve him? And how will we profit, that we should pray to him

If it would be clearer in your language, you could continue to translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "They ask who the Almighty is, that they should serve him, and how they would profit, that they should pray to him" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Who {is} the Almighty, that we should serve him? And how will we profit, that we should pray to him

Job is continuing to quote what wicked people say. The wicked people may no longer be speaking "to God," as in the previous verse, but speaking about God. Alternatively, they may be speaking to God but using the third person. You might choose to translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "Who are you, the Almighty, that we should serve you? And how will we profit, that we should pray to you?" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p. 1183)**)

Who {is} the Almighty, that we should serve him? And how will we profit, that we should pray to him

The wicked people are using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "The Almighty is not important, so we do not have to serve him! It would not benefit us, so we do not have to pray to him!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 21:16

Behold, their prosperity {is} not in their hand! May} the counsel of the wicked {be} far from me

Job is making two statements in this verse that express strong feelings. In the previous verse, he described how wicked people say that they do not need to pray to God because that would not benefit them. In his first statement here, he insists in response that any benefit or **prosperity** that the wicked enjoy is something that God has generously given to them even though they do not deserve it. In his second statement, Job reacts strongly against the **counsel** or advice that he said wicked people give themselves, that they should not serve the Almighty or pray to him. The ULT places exclamation marks at the end of these sentences to show that they communicate strong emotion. In your translation, use your own language's way of showing that. (See: **Exclamations (p.1179)**)

is} not in their hand

Job is using the word **hand** to represent the power and control that people have over something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "is not of their own making" or "is not something that they have gained by themselves" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

May} the counsel of the wicked {be} far from me

Job is speaking as if he wanted the **counsel of the wicked** literally to be **far** away from him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I want nothing to do with the counsel of the wicked" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 21:17

How often does the lamp of the wicked go out, or does their calamity come upon them? How often,} in his nose, does he distribute pains

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "The lamp of the wicked does not often go out! No, their calamity does not come upon them often! God does not distribute pains to them in his anger!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

How often does the lamp of the wicked go out

Job is speaking as if wicked people literally had a **lamp** that might **go out** or stop burning. He is using this image to represent them dying. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "How often do the wicked die" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

or does their calamity come upon them

Job is speaking as if **calamity** were literally an object that **comes upon** people. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "or how often do they experience their calamity" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

their calamity

It might seem that the expression **their calamity** contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: "calamity" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

How often,} in his nose, does he distribute pains

The pronouns **his** and **he** refer to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "Does God distribute pains to them in his anger" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 21:18

How often} are they like stubble to the face of the wind or like chaff that a storm carries away

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "They are not often like stubble to the face of the wind or like chaff that a storm carries away!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

How often} are they like stubble to the face of the wind or like chaff that a storm carries away

Job is comparing God's punishment to the **wind** and a **storm**, and he is comparing wicked people to **stubble** and **chaff** that strong winds drive away quickly and completely. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could say this in plain language. Alternate translation: "How often does God destroy them quickly and completely in punishment for their sins" or, as a statement, "God does not often destroy them quickly and completely in punishment for their sins" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

to the face of the wind

Here the phrase **to the face of** means "in the presence of," by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. To say that something is in the presence of the wind is to say that the wind is blowing on it. Alternate translation: "when the wind blows on it" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 21:19

God lays up his guilt for his sons

Since this sentence does not agree with what Job says in the rest of this speech, Job must be quoting a popular saying that he knows Zophar would agree with (see, for example, [20:10](#)). You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “You say, ‘God lays up his guilt for his sons’” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

God lays up his guilt for his sons

If you decide to identify this explicitly as a popular saying that Job is quoting, if it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “You say that God lays up his guilt for his sons” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

God lays up his guilt for his sons

This saying speaks of **guilt** as something that can be stored for later use. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God remembers what he is guilty of doing and punishes his sons for it” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

for his sons

Here the masculine term **sons** has a generic sense that includes both male and female children. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use translate this in a way that shows that. Alternate translation: “for his sons and daughters” or “for his children” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Let him repay to him, and he will know

The first instance of **him** refers to God, while the second instance of **him** and the word **he** refer to a wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Let God repay to the wicked person, and that person will know” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Let him repay to him

Here the word **repay** has the sense of “punish.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Let God punish him” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and he will know

Job means implicitly that if God would **repay** or punish the wicked person, then that person would **know** that he was guilty of sinning. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and he will know that he is guilty of sinning” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 21:20

Let his eyes see his destruction

Job is using one part of the wicked person, his **eyes**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Let him see his own destruction" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and from the wrath of the Almighty let him drink

Job is speaking as if **the wrath of the Almighty** were a liquid that a wicked person could literally **drink**. He means that he wishes that wicked people would experience that wrath. Alternate translation: "and let him experience the wrath of the Almighty" or "and let the Almighty punish him in his wrath" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 21:21

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said in the previous two verses that God should punish wicked people themselves rather than their children. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Let the wicked person himself suffer, for” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

what {is} his interest in his house after him when the number of his months is cut off

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “he has no interest in his house after him when the number of his months is cut off!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

in his house

Job is most likely using the term **house** by association to mean the household or family of a wicked person. The popular saying that he quoted in verse 19 suggested that God would punish a wicked person by making his children suffer, but Job is saying here that after a wicked person dies, he will not care about that. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in his family” or “in his children” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

when the number of his months is cut off

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “when God cuts off the number of his months” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

when the number of his months is cut off

Job is speaking as if the **number of months** that a wicked person would live might literally be **cut off**, as if it were a branch on a tree, for example. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “when the number of his months ends” or “when his lifetime ends” or “when God ends his lifetime” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 21:22

Will one teach knowledge to God, since he judges the ones being high

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "No one can teach knowledge to God, since he judges the ones being high!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the ones being high

Job is probably using the term **high** by association to mean angels, who are high in heaven. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "even the angels" (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

Job 21:23

This one

The pronoun **This** does not refer to a specific person. Job is using it to describe one kind of person and to introduce a contrast with a different kind of person, whom he describes as “That one” in verse 25. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “One person” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

in the bone of his perfection

In this expression, the word **bone** indicates the essence of something. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “at the height of his perfection” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

in the bone of his perfection

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **perfection**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “while he is still perfectly healthy” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

all of him {is} tranquil and secure

Job says **all** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “he is very tranquil and secure” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

all of him {is} tranquil and secure

The terms **tranquil** and **secure** mean similar things. Job may be using the two terms together for emphasis. However, there is a slight difference between them. The word **tranquil** refers more to a person not having to worry about threats, while the word **secure** refers more to a person being wealthy. You could express both words with a single phrase that would communicate emphasis, or you could use two words to bring out the different shades of meaning. Alternate translation: “he is very comfortable” or “he is so wealthy that he does not worry” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 21:24

His pails are full of milk

Interpreters are not entirely sure of the meaning of the word translated as **pails**. One likely interpretation is that it describes pails that people would use to collect milk from their cattle. If that is the meaning, then Job is using one aspect of this person's prosperity, the fact that his cattle give milk abundantly, to indicate that the person is prosperous in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "His cattle give milk abundantly" or "He is very prosperous" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and the marrow of his bones is moistened

Job is using one aspect of this person's health, the fact that the **marrow of his bones** is healthy, to indicate that the person is healthy in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he is very healthy" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

is moistened

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "is moist" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 21:25

But that one

See how you translated the expression “This one” in [21:23](#). Alternate translation: “But another person” (See: [Pronouns — When to Use Them \(p.1267\)](#))

in the soul of bitterness

Like the word “bone” in verse 21, in this expression, the word **soul** indicates the essence of something. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “in the depths of bitterness” (See: [Idiom \(p.1207\)](#))

in the soul of bitterness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **bitterness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “when his life is very bitter” (See: [Abstract Nouns \(p.1134\)](#))

and he has not eaten the good

Job is talking about more than food here, and so when he speaks as if a person could literally have **eaten** things that are **good** (although in this case the person did not), he means experiencing those things. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he has not experienced the good” (See: [Metaphor \(p.1238\)](#))

and he has not eaten the good

Job is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean a certain kind of thing. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “and he has not experienced good things” or “and he has not enjoyed good things” (See: [Nominal Adjectives \(p.1246\)](#))

Job 21:26

They lie down alike in the dust

Job is using the phrase **lie down ... in the dust** to mean “die.” This is a poetic way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “They both die and are buried” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

and the worm covers over them

Job is not referring to a specific **worm**. He means worms in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “and worms cover them both” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and the worm covers over them

The implication of worms covering the bodies of these dead people is that the worms are eating their bodies. For clarity, you could indicate that in your. Alternate translation: “and worms eat their bodies” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 21:27

I know your thoughts and the notions

Job implicitly means that he knows his friends are thinking of him when they speak of a wicked person. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “I know that when you speak of a wicked person, you are speaking of me, and I know the notions” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

your thoughts & you wrest

The words **your** and **you** are plural here because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. The words “you” and “your” are plural in the rest of the chapter as well, specifically in verses 29 and 34. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

and the notions you wrest against me

Job is speaking as if his friends would literally **wrest**, or yank violently out of place, **notions** or ideas to use against him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and the ideas you misappropriate to use against me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 21:28

For you say, 'Where {is} the house of the tyrant? Where {is} the tent of the habitation of the wicked

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "For you ask where the house of the tyrant is and where the tent of the habitation of the wicked is" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Where {is} the house of the tyrant? Where {is} the tent of the habitation of the wicked

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "The house of the tyrant is gone! The tent of the habitation of the wicked is gone!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Where {is} the house of the tyrant? Where {is} the tent of the habitation of the wicked

In this quotation that Job attributes to his friends, he is using one possession of a **prince**, his **house**, and one possession of the wicked, their **tent**, to mean all of their possessions and ultimately their lives. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as exclamations: "The tyrant no longer lives among us! The wicked no longer live among us!" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Where {is} the house of the tyrant? Where {is} the tent of the habitation of the wicked

This quotation means implicitly that the **tyrant** and the **wicked** are no longer alive because God has killed them to punish them for doing wrong. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "God punishes the tyrant by killing him! God punishes the wicked by killing them!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Where {is} the house of the tyrant

Job is not referring to a specific **tyrant**. He means tyrants in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "Where are the houses of tyrants?" or "Tyrants no longer live among us!" or "God punishes tyrants by killing them!" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Where {is} the tent of the habitation of the wicked

Job is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Since Job is speaking of more than one person, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of "tent." Alternate translation: "Where are the tents in which wicked people lived?" or "Wicked people no longer live among us!" or "God punishes wicked people by killing them!" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

is} the tent of the habitation of the wicked

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **habitation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "the tent in which the wicked lived" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 21:29

Have you not asked travelers of the way

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You must have asked travelers of the way!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Have you not asked travelers of the way

Job means implicitly that his friends must have heard from widely traveled people that the wicked are not always punished as they have been claiming. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "You must have asked travelers of the way, and they must have told you what really happens to wicked people!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

travelers of the way

Job is not referring to a specific **way**, that is, to a specific road or route. He means roads in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "people who travel on roads" or "people who have traveled widely" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Or do you not acknowledge their signs

This is the beginning of a sentence in which Job is using the question form for emphasis. The sentence continues into the next verse. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should acknowledge their signs" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Or & their signs

Job is using the word **signs** in a specific sense. He means proofs or tokens that something is true. He is probably referring to stories that travelers tell of wicked people whom they have seen or heard about. These stories, in Job's opinion, would offer evidence that he is right and his friends are wrong about what happens to wicked people. (Job describes the content of these stories in the next verse.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Or ... the truth of the stories they tell about wicked people" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 21:30

that the wicked is spared in the day of calamity; in the day of wrath they are brought forth

In this verse, Job completes a sentence that he began in the previous verse using the question form for emphasis. If in the previous verse you said something such as “You should acknowledge their signs,” you may be able to translate this much as it appears in the ULT, treating it as the continuation of a statement or exclamation. Alternate translation: “that the wicked is spared in the day of calamity, that in the day of wrath they are brought forth.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the wicked is spared

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “God spares the wicked” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the wicked

Job is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “a wicked person” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

in the day of calamity

Job is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “at the time of calamity” or “when calamity happens” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

in the day of wrath

Job is once again using the term **day** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “at the time of wrath” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

in the day of wrath

Job is using the term **wrath** by association to mean God punishing people in his wrath. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “at the time when God punishes people,” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

they are brought forth

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. The idea is that wicked people are **brought forth** from, that is, taken out of, the group of people whom God is punishing. Alternate translation: “God brings them forth” or “God does not punish them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 21:31

Who will denounce his way to his face? And what he has done, who will repay to him

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "No one declares his way to his face! No one repays him for what he has done!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

his way

Job is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** or path that the person was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "his manner of life" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to his face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "to him personally" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

And what he has done, who will repay to him

As in verse 19, here the word **repay** has the sense of "punish." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as a statement: "God does not punish him for what he has done." (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 21:32

Indeed, he will be brought forth to the grave

The word that the ULT translates as **brought forth** here is the same word that it translates as “brought forth” in verse 30. Job is saying that a wicked person is not only spared from God’s punishment, he is buried with honor in a great procession (which Job describes further in the next verse). Your language may similarly have a term that you could use in both contexts to show the contrast that Job is drawing here between what a wicked person deserves and what he gets. (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

Indeed, he will be brought forth

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “Indeed, people will carry him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and one will watch over the burial mound

The implication is that people will keep **watch** over the wicked person’s **burial mound** to make sure that it is kept in good order and not desecrated. In other words, even in death the wicked person has an honored place in the community. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and people from the community will watch his burial mound to make sure that no one desecrates it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the burial mound

In this culture, to show special honor to a person after his death, people might build a **mound** of stones or earth over his grave. If your readers would not be familiar with this practice, in your translation you could name a comparable practice of your own culture, or you could convey the meaning with a general expression. Alternate translation: “his honorable burial site” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 21:33

The clods of the torrent

Job is using the phrase **The clods of the torrent** by association to mean the burial mound that the wicked person's mourners build up over his grave. He is using the word **torrent** to mean the course that a torrent or stream flows through, from which people could take **clods** of dirt to build a mound. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "His burial mound" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

will be sweet to him

Job is speaking as if the wicked person, even after death, could literally taste his burial mound and find it to be **sweet**. Job means that the wicked person would enjoy being honored with a burial mound. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "will honor him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

every man

Job says **every** here as a generalization for emphasis. He means that a procession consisting of a large number of people will follow the wicked person's body to its grave. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "a long procession" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

and to his face

In this context, the phrase **to his face** means "in front of him" or "ahead of him." It is a further reference to the funeral procession for the wicked person. Alternate translation: "and ahead of him" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

there is not numbering

As a generalization for emphasis, Job is saying that a number of people too great to count will walk in front of the wicked person's body to lead it in an honorary procession to his grave. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "people in great numbers are also walking" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 21:34

So how do you comfort me in vain

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You are comforting me in vain!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

And falsehood is left in your answers

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Job is saying that once he disregards everything that seems to be present in his friends' **answers** but is not actually present, falsehood is the only thing that will remain. Alternate translation: "And your answers are nothing but falsehood" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

And falsehood is left in your answers

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **falsehood**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "And what you are saying in answer to me is entirely false" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 22

Job 22 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the third and last speech of Job's friend Eliphaz. What he says in this speech is stronger than what he says in his previous two speeches. He insists that Job must have done wrong, and he suggests several specific evil things that Job may have done.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Eliphaz answering Job with his own words

In several places in this chapter, Eliphaz answers Job with his own words. That is, Eliphaz uses the same expressions that Job did earlier, but with different meaning and implications. To help your readers appreciate this, you may wish to translate Eliphaz's expressions in these places in the same way that you translated Job's similar expressions earlier. Notes will suggest ways to do this.

Job 22:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 22:2

Can a man be useful to God

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "A man cannot be useful to God!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "a person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 22:3

Is it} pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous? Or if {it is} gain that you perfect your ways

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "It is not pleasure to the Almighty that you are righteous! It is not gain to him that you perfect your ways!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Or if {it is} gain that you perfect your ways

Eliphaz is using the word **if** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "it is not gain to him that you perfect your ways, is it" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

your ways

Job is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a series of **ways** or paths that the person was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "your manner of life" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 22:4

For your fear does he rebuke you, enter into judgment with you

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "God is certainly not rebuking you and entering into judgment with you because of your reverent respect for him!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

For your fear

By **fear**, Eliphaz implicitly means the fear of God, that is, reverent respect for God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "For your reverent respect for him" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 22:5

Is not your wickedness great

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Your wickedness is great!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

And there is no end to your iniquities

Eliphaz says **no end** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "And you are guilty of very many iniquities" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 22:6

For

Eliphaz is not saying that Job has definitely done the wrongs that he describes in this verse and the next three verses. He is using the word **For** to encourage Job to consider what he might have done wrong, since God seems to be punishing him for something. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “Perhaps” or “Consider whether” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

you have bound your brother {with a pledge} without cause

By **without cause**, Eliphaz probably means that Job did not need to take a garment in pledge as security for the kind of small loan that a laborer in this culture would require. Job was a wealthy man, Eliphaz notes in verse 8, and he could afford a relatively small loss, while the outer garment the laborer would have to give in pledge (described in the second half of the verse) probably represented his most valuable possession. Eliphaz may also be suggesting that the laborer was trustworthy and Job could have and should have trusted him to repay the loan without demanding security. Your culture may have terms and customs relating to loans and pledges that you could use in your translation to bring out the implicit meaning here. Alternate translation: “you have forced your brother to give you his outer garment as security for a loan, even though you did not need to do that” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

your brother

Eliphaz is using the term **brother** figuratively to mean a fellow human being. He is suggesting that Job should feel an affinity for any fellow human. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “your fellow human being” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and you have stripped off the clothing of the naked

The word translated **naked** can describe people who have little clothing, and that seems to be the meaning here. It would not make sense to speak of the **clothing** of people who were **naked** in the sense of having no clothing. The idea seems to be that by taking in pledge an outer garment that a laborer would also use as a blanket at night, Job was leaving that person without enough clothing to stay warm. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “indeed, you have left that person without enough clothing to stay warm” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 22:7

the weary & and from the hungry

Eliphaz is using the adjectives **weary** and **hungry** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “weary people ... and from hungry people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

bread

Eliphaz is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “food” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 22:8

but the man of arm, the earth {was} to him, and the lifted of face dwelt upon it

Eliphaz could mean: (1) that Job himself was this **man of arm**. In that case he would be speaking of Job in the third person, even though he was speaking directly to Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: “even though, as a man of arm, the earth was to you, and you dwelt upon it as someone lifted of face” (2) that Job showed favoritism to powerful and honored people. Alternate translation: “but you decided in favor of the man of arm and the lifted of face, so that the earth was to them and they dwelt upon it” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

but the man of arm, the earth {was} to him

The expression **the man of arm** means a powerful person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “but the powerful person, the earth was to him” or “but as a powerful person, the earth was to you” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the earth {was} to him

Eliphaz is speaking as if this **man of arm** possessed the entire **earth**. He likely means that this person (possibly Job) owned much land. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “he owned much land” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

and the lifted of face dwelt

The expression **lifted of face** means to be favored or honored. (See the discussion of the phrase “lift his face” in the General Notes to chapter 13.) Alternate translation: “and honored people dwelt” or “and you as an honored person dwelt” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and the lifted of face

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and people who received honors” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 22:9

and the arms of the fatherless have been broken

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and you have broken the arms of the fatherless” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and the arms of the fatherless have been broken

Job is using the adjective **fatherless** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent word or phrase. Alternate translation: “and you have broken the arms of orphans” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and the arms of the fatherless have been broken

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job had literally **broken** the **arms** of **fatherless** people. He means that Job has not helped orphans but has treated them in a way that has made them even weaker and more destitute. (As in the previous verse, the arm is a symbol of power.) If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and you have taken advantage of orphans” or “and you have exploited orphans” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 22:10

snare {are} around you

Eliphaz is speaking as if **snare**s or traps were literally surrounding Job. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you are having many different kinds of trouble” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and fear suddenly terrifies you

Eliphaz is using the term **fear** by association to mean things that cause fear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and fearful things suddenly terrify you” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 22:11

Or darkness—you cannot see

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “And that is why you are in darkness and cannot see” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Or darkness—you cannot see

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job were literally in **darkness** and could not **see** anything. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “And that is why your troubles are so great that you do not know what to do about them” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

And an abundance of waters covers you

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job were literally engulfed in deep **waters**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Yes, that is why you feel completely overwhelmed” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 22:12

Is not God in the height of the heavens

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "God is in the height of the heavens!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

in the height of the heavens

Eliphaz is using this possessive form to describe the highest part of the **heavens**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "in the highest heaven" or "in heaven, above the sky" (See: **Possession (p. 1261)**)

And behold the head of the stars, that they are high

In this context, the word **head** means "height." If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And behold how high the stars are" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

And behold the head of the stars, that they are high

The implication is that since God is above the stars, and the stars are very high up, the highest things that people can see, then God must be supremely high. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "God is even above the stars, even though those are the highest things that we can see" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 22:13

But you say, 'What does God know? Will he judge through thick darkness

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "But you say that God does not know what is happening here on earth and that he cannot judge through thick darkness" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

What does God know? Will he judge through thick darkness

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "God does not know what is happening here on earth! He cannot judge through thick darkness!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will he judge through thick darkness

As is clear from the next verse, Eliphaz is using the expression **thick darkness** by association to mean dark clouds. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as a statement: "He cannot see through dark clouds in order to know how to judge people!" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 22:14

Clouds {are} a covering to him and he does not see; indeed, he walks around on the dome of the heavens

If you decided in the previous verse to translate this quotation as an indirect quotation, you can continue to do that in this verse. In many languages it will not be necessary to change the wording from that of a direct quotation. (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

and he does not see

Eliphaz implicitly means that by saying this, Job means that God does not **see** what is happening on earth. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and he does not see what is happening on earth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

indeed, he walks around on the dome of the heavens

The implication is that because the **dome of the heavens** is above the clouds, the clouds block God’s view of the earth. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “indeed, he walks around on the dome of the heavens, where the clouds block his view of the earth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 22:15

Will you keep the old way that men of iniquity have walked

Eliphaz is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. This sentence continues for the next two verses. Alternate translation: “You should not keep the old way that men of iniquity have walked” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will you keep the old way that men of iniquity have walked

Eliphaz is speaking of how people live as if that were a **way** or path that people were walking along. When Eliphaz asks whether Job will **keep** that way or stay on that path, he is asking whether Job really wants to live that way himself. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Will you live as men of iniquity have customarily lived” or, as a statement, “You should not live as men of iniquity have customarily lived” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

men of iniquity

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 22:16

who were carried off

Eliphaz is speaking as if these “men of iniquity” were literally **carried off** as if they were a bundle of sticks that someone had collected. He means that they died. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “who died” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

who were carried off

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “whom death carried off” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and {it was} not time

Eliphaz implicitly means that these wicked men died before it was their **time** to die. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “before it was their time to die” or “while they were still young” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

their foundations were washed away by a torrent

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “a torrent washed away their foundations” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

their foundations were washed away by a torrent

Eliphaz is speaking as if these wicked men were buildings that collapsed when a **torrent** of water destroyed their **foundations**. The suggestion in the image is that the men died unexpectedly and violently. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, they died unexpectedly and violently” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 22:17

the ones saying to God, 'Turn away from us,' and, 'What will the Almighty do to them

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "the ones who told God to turn away from them and asked what the Almighty would do to them" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Turn away from us

Eliphaz depicts these wicked people as speaking as if they wanted God literally to **turn away** from them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the same expression in [21:14](#). Alternate translation: "Do not be concerned with us" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and, 'What will the Almighty do to them

The wicked people are speaking about themselves in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "and, 'What will the Almighty do to us'" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

and, 'What will the Almighty do to them

The wicked people are using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "and, 'The Almighty will not do anything to us!'" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

and, 'What will the Almighty do to them

The wicked people implicitly mean that the Almighty will not do anything to punish them if they do the wrong actions that they are contemplating. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and, 'The Almighty will not do anything to us if we do evil things!'" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 22:18

Yet he filled their houses with good

The pronoun **he** refers to God. Eliphaz is echoing what Job said about wicked people in [21:16](#), “their prosperity is not in their hand,” that is, their prosperity is not of their own making. Eliphaz is saying, as Job did, that any **good** the wicked enjoy is something that God has generously given to them even though they do not deserve it. Eliphaz is agreeing with Job on that point, although he is making it in support of a different conclusion, that in the end, God actually does punish the wicked in this life. Alternate translation: “Yet God filled their houses with good” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Yet he filled their houses with good

Eliphaz is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean a certain kind of thing. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “Yet he filled their houses with good things” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Yet he filled their houses with good

Eliphaz says **filled** here as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “Yet he generously gave them many good things” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

so {may} the counsel of the wicked {be} far from me

Eliphaz is echoing what Job said in [21:16](#). He is speaking as if he wanted the **counsel of the wicked** literally to be **far** away from him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See how you translated the similar expression in [21:16](#). Alternate translation: “so I want nothing to do with the counsel of the wicked” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 22:19

The righteous see

Eliphaz implicitly means that the righteous **see** what happens to wicked people. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “The righteous see what happens to wicked people” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

The righteous & and the innocent

Eliphaz is using the adjectives **righteous** and **innocent** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “Righteous people ... and innocent people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 22:20

If our enemy is not cut off? And fire has devoured their possessions

The pronoun **their** refers to the **enemy** mentioned in the first part of the verse. It may be more natural in your language to make the pronoun agree in number. Since Eliphaz speaks of wicked people in the plural in these verses, you may find it appropriate to do that by saying “enemies.” Alternate translation: “If our enemies are not cut off? And fire has devoured their possessions” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

If our enemy is not cut off? And fire has devoured their possessions

Eliphaz is quoting what righteous and innocent people say about wicked people whom God destroys. If that would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that in your translation. Alternate translation: “They say, ‘If our enemies are not cut off? And fire has devoured their possessions!’” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1167)**)

If our enemy is not cut off? And fire has devoured their possessions

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “They say that their enemies have been cut off and that fire has devoured their possessions” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

If our enemy is not cut off

The righteous and innocent people are using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “Our enemies have been cut off, have they not” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If our enemy is not cut off

The righteous and innocent people are using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “Our enemies have been cut off!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If our enemy is not cut off

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: “God has cut off our enemies!” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

If our enemy is not cut off

To make a different point, that God actually judges wicked people in this life, Eliphaz is echoing what Job said in 21:21. There Job spoke of a wicked person dying as if he were literally being **cut off**, like a branch from a tree. See how you translated the similar expression there. Alternate translation: “God has ended the lives of our enemies!” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

And fire has devoured their possessions

Eliphaz depicts innocent and righteous people as speaking as if **fire** had destroyed the **possessions** of wicked people. Eliphaz depicts them as speaking as if the fire had literally **devoured** or eaten the possessions. If it would

be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And they have lost their possessions" or "And other people will now get their possessions" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 22:21

Reconcile now with him and be at peace

Eliphaz is echoing his own words at the beginning of this speech and Job's words in his preceding speech. In verse 2, Eliphaz insisted that a person cannot be "useful to God," that is, a person can do nothing to win God's favor or to put God under obligation. Here Eliphaz uses a different form of the same verb to encourage Job to **Reconcile** with God. A person, he says, can at least cultivate a good relationship with God. Job said in [21:19](#) that he wished God would "repay" wicked people, that is, punish them. Eliphaz uses the same verb here to encourage Job to be **at peace** with God, with the suggestion that to that end, Job should do whatever is necessary to make up for any wrong things he has done. Your language may have terms that you could use here and in [21:19](#) and [22:2](#) in order to show these connections. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and be at peace

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **peace**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and have a peaceful relationship with him" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

by these

The pronoun **these** refers to the actions of reconciling and being at peace with God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "if you do these things" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

good will come to you

Eliphaz is using the adjective **good** as a noun to mean a certain kind of thing. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "good things will come to you" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

good will come to you

Eliphaz is speaking of **good** as if it were a living thing that could **come** to Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you will have good things once again" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 22:22

accept instruction from his mouth

Eliphaz is using the term **mouth** by association to mean what God says by using his mouth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “let what God says instruct you” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and set his words in your heart

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job could literally **set** God’s **words** in his **heart**. He is using the **heart** to represent the memory. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, carefully remember his words” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and set his words in your heart

Eliphaz is using the term **words** to mean what God says by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “yes, carefully remember what he says” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 22:23

you will be built up, if you distance unrighteousness from your tent

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the phrase **if you distance unrighteousness from your tent**, like the phrase **** If you return to the Almighty, gives the reason for the result that would follow**, you will be built up**. Alternate translation: “if you distance unrighteousness from your tent, you will be built up” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

you will be built up

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “he will build you up” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

you will be built up

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job were a building that God would rebuild after it had been ruined. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God will restore you to health and prosperity” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

if you distance unrighteousness from your tent

Eliphaz is speaking as if **unrighteousness** were an object that Job could literally set at some **distance** from the **tent** in which he lives. In this image, the tent represents Job’s life. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “if you stop practicing unrighteousness in your life” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

if you distance unrighteousness from your tent

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **unrighteousness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “if you stop doing unrighteous things” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 22:24

And set gold in the dust, and Ophir among the stones of the torrents

Eliphaz is using an imperative sentence to tell the condition under which something would happen. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate this as a conditional sentence. Alternate translation: “Now if you set your gold in the dust, and Ophir among the stones of the torrents” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.1210)**)

And set gold in the dust, and Ophir among the stones of the torrents

Eliphaz is speaking as if he wants Job literally to throw away his **gold**, including the fine gold he has from the land of **Ophir**, so that it lands **in the dust** and **among the stones of the torrents**. He means that Job should not depend on gold as a source of security. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, combining the parallel statements into a single statement and conveying the emphasis of the parallelism in another way: “Now if you do not rely on gold at all” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

And set gold in the dust, and Ophir among the stones of the torrents

Eliphaz is using one type of wealth, **gold**, including fine gold from **Ophir**, to mean wealth in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “And abandon all of your wealth” or “Now if you do not rely on wealth at all” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Ophir

The word **Ophir** is the name of a land that produced gold of excellent quality. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

Ophir

Eliphaz is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “set Ophir” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Ophir

Eliphaz is using the name **Ophir** by association to mean gold from the country of Ophir. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “set the gold of Ophir” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 22:25

then the Almighty will be your golds and silver of heights to you

Eliphaz is speaking as if **the Almighty** would literally be precious metals that Job owned. He means that Job would value the Almighty more than anything else. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “then you will value the Almighty more than anything else” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

your golds

Eliphaz is using the plural form **golds** to indicate gold of supreme excellence. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: “more valuable to you than the finest gold you could possess” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

and silver of heights

Eliphaz is using the plural form **heights** to indicate silver of superlative quality. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: “and silver of the highest quality” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 22:26

and you will lift your face to God

In [10:15](#), Job said to God, “I will not lift my head.” He means that he would look down as a symbolic action to express that he was feeling shame. Here Eliphaz responds that Job will no longer need to do that. See how you translated the similar expression in [10:15](#). Alternate translation: “and you will no longer need to look down, away from God, in shame” or “and you will be confident that God accepts you” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 22:27

and he will hear you

In this context, the word **hear** means to grant a request. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he will grant your request” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and your vows you will pay

Eliphaz assumes that Job will understand that by **vows** he means the vows that a person in this culture would make to God to promise public recognition of mercies granted. The implication is that God would grant such mercies to Job and so he would have occasion to **pay** such **vows**. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and you will have occasion to thank God publicly for mercies that he has granted to you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 22:28

And you will decree a word

Eliphaz is using the term **word** to mean what Job might say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “And you will say what you want to happen” or “And you will say what you plan to do” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and it will stand for you

In this context, the word **stand** means “happen,” with the idea of surety and durability. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and it will certainly happen for you” or “and you will certainly be able to do it” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and on your paths light will shine

Eliphaz is speaking of the plans Job might want to carry out as if they were a series of **paths** that Job would be walking along. When he says that **light** will **shine** on these paths, he means that Job will know clearly how to carry out his plans. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and you will know clearly how to carry out your plans successfully” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 22:29

they cast down and you say, 'Lifting up

Eliphaz is speaking as if people might literally **cast Job down**, that is, throw him down from a height or throw him onto the ground. He is also speaking as if Job might ask God to lift him up from where people had thrown him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "you are in difficult circumstances and you say, 'Help me!'" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they cast down

Here, **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "when you are cast down" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and you say, 'Lifting up

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "and you ask God to lift you up" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

he will save

The pronoun **he** refers to God. Eliphaz is talking about the results of prayer, as he described in verse 27. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "God will save" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

then & the lowered of eyes

Job is using the adjective phrase **the lowered of eyes** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "then ... the person who has lowered his eyes" or "then ... the who is looking down" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

then & the lowered of eyes

In this culture, lowering one's **eyes** was a symbolic action that indicated that one was in difficult circumstances and felt humbled by them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "then ... the person who is humbled by being in difficult circumstances" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

then & the lowered of eyes

Eliphaz is speaking about Job in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "then ... you from the difficult circumstances that have humbled you" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Job 22:30

He will rescue & indeed, he will be rescued

The pronoun **He** in the first part of this verse refers to God, while the pronoun **he** in the second part of the verse refers to a person who is not innocent. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God will rescue ... indeed, that person will be rescued” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the not-innocent

Job is using the adjective **not-innocent** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “people who are not innocent” or “people who are guilty of sin” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

indeed, he will be rescued

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “indeed, God will rescue him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

through the cleanness of your hands

Eliphaz is likely using the term **hands** by association to mean “prayers,” since people in this culture lifted their hands when they prayed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “through the cleanness of your prayers” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

through the cleanness of your hands

Eliphaz is speaking as if Job would have literally refrained from doing things that would make his **hands** dirty. He means that Job would not have done wrong things, and so he could offer prayers to God as an innocent person whose prayers God would answer. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “through the prayers that you, as an innocent person, offer for him” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 23

Job 23 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the beginning of Job's response to Eliphaz's third and final speech. Job's response continues in the next chapter.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Legal proceeding

In this chapter, Job speaks of making a legal case to prove his innocence to God. As a note to [9:3](#) explains, in this culture, people typically presented such cases to community leaders in public places such as the gate of a town. Each party in a dispute would question the other party in the presence of the leaders, and the leaders would then discuss the case and decide which party was guilty and which party was innocent. However, the Bible indicates that judges would also travel around from place to place and hear cases. For example, [1 Samuel 7:16-17](#) says that Samuel "went around to Bethel and Gilgal and Mizpah and judged Israel in all those places." Job is envisioning God serving as this kind of judge and hearing his case. In your translation, express his language in such a way that readers who are familiar with the legal process in your own culture will recognize what Job is saying.

Translation issues in This chapter

"he," "him," and "his"

The pronouns "he," "him," and "his" refer to God throughout this chapter. The UST models how a translation may say "God" regularly in order to make this clear.

"my hand" or "his hand" (23:2)

In verse 2, Hebrew manuscripts read "my hand." The ULT follows that reading. Some ancient translations of the Hebrew Bible into other languages say "his hand," and some modern versions follow that reading. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT.

Job 23:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 23:2

Even today

Job is using this expression to emphasize to his friends that their arguments have not changed his situation at all. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Despite all the things you have said to me," (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

my complaint is bitter

Job is speaking as if his **complaint** about what has happened to him is **bitter** or bad-tasting. The image is that what he says is so unpleasant that it leaves a bad taste in his mouth when he says it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have many unpleasant things to complain about" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

my hand is heavy upon my groaning

Job is speaking as if he were literally holding his **hand** down hard on his **groaning** in order to suppress it. He means that there is more that he could groan or complain about than he has actually stated yet. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have been suppressing my groaning" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 23:3

Who will give {that} I knew and I would find him

See how you translated the expression **Who will give** in 11:5–6. Alternate translation: “I wish that I knew and I would find him!” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

I knew and I would find him

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **knew** tells in what way Job would be able to **find** God. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “I knew where to find him” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

I knew and I would find him? & his place

The pronouns **him** and **his** refer to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “I knew where to find God ... the place where God lives” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 23:4

to his face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: “in his presence” or “to him personally” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and I would fill my mouth with arguments

Job is speaking as if **arguments** were objects with which he could literally **fill** his mouth. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and I would make many arguments as I spoke” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 23:5

I would know the words he would answer me

Job is using the term **words** to mean what God would say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I would know what he would tell me in response" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 23:6

he would only set upon me

Job is leaving out some of the words of a characteristic Hebrew expression that occurs in full form in [1:8](#), [2:3](#), and [7:17](#). Alternate translation: “he would only set his heart upon me” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

he would only set upon me

See how you translated this expression in [1:8](#), [2:3](#), and [7:17](#). Alternate translation: “he would only consider what I had to say” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 23:7

There

There implicitly means in God's presence, as Job describes in verses 3 and 4. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "In God's presence," (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the upright is arguing with him

Job is using the participle **arguing** to depict action as occurring regularly in order to indicate that it is possible. Alternate translation: "the upright can reason with him" (See: **Irregular Use of Tenses (p.1224)**)

the upright is arguing with him

Job is likely referring to himself when he speaks of an **upright** person. In that case, he would be speaking of himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "an upright person like me can reason with him" or "I, as an upright person, can reason with him" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

the upright

Job is using the adjective **upright** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "an upright person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 23:8

In this verse and the next verse, Job is using the four major directions to mean everywhere in creation. He is speaking of looking everywhere for the “place” where God lives, as he described in verse 3. To show this, you could create a verse bridge for verses 8–9. It might say something like this: “Behold, I could go everywhere in creation, and I might see evidence of God at work, but I would not find him personally” (See: **Verse Bridges (p.1301)**)

Job 23:9

in his working in the north, I do not behold {him

Many interpreters believe that when Job refers to God's **working in the north**, he means the northern lights (the aurora borealis). You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "when I see the northern lights, I believe that God must be present to create such beauty, but if I went to the north, I would not behold him personally" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 23:10

the way {that is} with me

Job is speaking of how he has been living as if that were a **way** or path that he has been walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “how I have been living” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he has tested me, I have come out like gold

Job is using the past tense in order to refer to something that he hopes will happen in the future. He is doing this to describe what he is confident the outcome would be. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use the future tense. Alternate translation: “when he tests me, I will come out like gold” (See: **Predictive Past (p.1265)**)

he has tested me, I have come out like gold

The point of this comparison is that just as genuine **gold** is shown to be pure when it is **tested**, so God giving Job a hearing would show that he is innocent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “when he tests me, this will show that I am innocent, just as testing gold shows its purity” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 23:11

My foot has held onto his step

Job is speaking as if he has used his **foot** literally to hold onto each place where God had stepped. He means that he has walked exactly where God had walked, putting his feet down right where God put his feet down. Job is using this image to mean that he has obeyed God exactly. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have obeyed God exactly" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

I have kept {to} his way and I have not turned aside

Job is speaking of how God wants a person to live as if that were a **way** or path that the person should walk along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have lived consistently in the way God wants people to live" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 23:12

I have not departed from the commandment of his lips

Job is speaking as if he had not physically gone away from or **departed** from God's **commandment**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have not disobeyed the commandment of his lips" or, positively, "I have obeyed the commandment of his lips" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

from the commandment of his lips

Job is using the term **lips** by association to mean speaking, since people use their lips when they speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from the commandment that he has spoken" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

from the commandment of his lips

Job is not referring to a specific **commandment**. He means God's commandments in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "from the commandments that he has spoken" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the words of his mouth

Job is using the term **words** to mean what God has commanded by using words, and he is similarly using the term **mouth** to mean speaking, since people use their mouths when they speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the things his mouth has said" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the words of his mouth

Job is using one part of God, his **mouth**, to mean all of him in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the things that he has said" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

more than my portion

By **portion**, Job implicitly means his daily portion of food. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "more than the food that I eat" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 23:13

But he {is} of one

Job is leaving out a word that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. The context suggests that Job means that God **is of one** opinion, that is, he has decided one thing definitively. If it would be clearer in your language, you can supply the missing word. Your language may have a natural expression that would suit this context. Alternate translation: "But he is of one mind" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and who will turn him back

Job is speaking as if someone might physically **turn** God **back** from going in one direction and make God go in a different direction. He is speaking of someone making God change his mind. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and who will make him change his mind" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and who will turn him back

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "and no one will turn him back" or "and no one can make him change his mind" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

For his soul desires, and he does

Job is using one part of God, his **soul**, to mean all of God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "For he desires to do something, and he does it" or "For he does whatever he desires" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 23:14

my decree

Job is using this possessive form to describe what God has decreed for him, not a **decree** that he has made himself. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “what he has decreed for me” or “what he has decided to do to me” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

and many like these {are} with him

The pronoun **these** probably refers to the sufferings that Job is already experiencing. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “and he is capable of afflicting me with many more sufferings if my present ones are not sufficient to fulfill his purpose” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 23:15

I am terrified from his face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "I am too terrified to be in his presence" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

I consider

Job is implicitly referring to when he might **consider** all that God might still do to him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I consider all that he might still do to me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 23:16

For God has softened my heart

Here, the **heart** represents the emotions and specifically the emotion of courage. Job is speaking as if God had literally made his heart **soft**. He means that God has caused him to lose courage. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "For God has caused me to lose courage" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 23:17

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he is terrified of God, as he described in the previous two verses. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I am terrified of God because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

I was not cut off

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God did not cut me off" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

I was not cut off

Job is speaking as if he might literally have been **cut off**, as if he were a branch on a tree, for example. He is talking about dying. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I did not die" or "God did not let me die" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

from the face of the darkness

In this instance, the phrase **from the face of** means "in front of" or "before." It refers to time rather than to place. Alternate translation: "before the time of darkness" or "before the darkness came" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

from the face of the darkness

Job is using the term **darkness** to represent troubles. See how you translated the similar expression in [20:26](#). Alternate translation: "before these troubles began" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and from my face gloom covers

In this instance, the phrase **from my face** means "in front of." It could refer either to place or to time. Alternate translation: "and gloom covers everything in front of me" or "and gloom covers everything that will happen to me in the future" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and from my face gloom covers

Job is speaking as if **gloom** were literally covering everything in front of him or everything that would happen to him in the future. He is using **gloom**, like **darkness** earlier in the verse, to represent troubles. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and there is trouble everywhere I look" or "and I can only anticipate further trouble happening to me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 24

Job 24 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the continuation of Job's response to Eliphaz's third and final speech. Job's response began in the previous chapter.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

God's judgment of wicked people

In verses 1–17, Job protests that God does not judge wicked people. He lists many oppressive things that wicked people do to vulnerable, innocent people, and he complains that God acts as if there were nothing wrong with those things. But in verses 18–24, Job then describes how God actually does judge wicked people. There is an explanation for this apparent contradiction. In the speech as a whole, Job is saying that he knows God will judge wicked people in the end, but it is very distressing to him that God does not judge and punish them now in order to keep them from continuing to oppress vulnerable people. In your translation, you can use language that shows that Job firmly believes what he says in both parts of the chapter, since it is actually consistent for him to say both that God seemingly does not judge wicked people now and that God ultimately will judge wicked people in the end. This is not a contradiction, it is a paradox, and the Bible speaks of it in other passages as well. For example, [Ecclesiastes 8:11](#) says that because God does not immediately punish people who do wrong, people feel that they can get away with doing wrong. But Ecclesiastes goes on to say in the next verse that even if a sinner might do a hundred evil things and live a long time, it is still better to obey God.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Changing referents of “they”

Job uses the word “they” throughout this chapter to mean both wicked people and the poor people whom they exploit. He does not often indicate when he is changing the referent of the word. Notes indicate the referent in each verse. In your translation, to be helpful to your readers, you may wish to specify “wicked people” or “poor people” each time the referent changes.

Job 24:1

Why are times not set by the Almighty? And {why} do the ones knowing him not see his days

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Times should be set by the Almighty! The ones knowing him ought to see his days!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Why are times not set by the Almighty

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Why does the Almighty not set times" or, as an exclamation, "The Almighty should set times!" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

times

Job implicitly means **times** for judgment. (See the discussion in the General Notes to chapter 23 of how judges in Israel would come to specific places at appointed times.) You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "times for judgment" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

And {why} do the ones knowing him not see his days

In this context, to **see** means to experience. See how you translated the similar expression in 7:7. Alternate translation: "And why do the ones knowing him not experience his days?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

his days

Job implicitly means **days** on which God would judge wicked people. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "days on which God judges wicked people" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:2

They remove boundary markers

The pronoun **They** refers to wicked people, not to “the ones knowing” God, as it does in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. The pronoun **they** in the second part of the verse also refers to wicked people, and that is also the reference in the next two verses. Alternate translation: “Wicked people remove boundary markers” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

They remove boundary markers

Job implicitly means that wicked people steal land from others by removing the **boundary markers** that indicate property lines and arguing that their property extends farther into their neighbor’s land than it actually does. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “They steal land from others by removing boundary markers” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

they seize the flock and pasture {it

Job is not referring to a specific **flock**. He means flocks in general that wicked people steal from vulnerable people such as widows and orphans, whom he names specifically in the next verse. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: “they seize flocks and pasture them” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and pasture {it

Job implicitly means that wicked people steal flocks from others and **pasture** them with their own flocks as if they had owned them all along. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and put others’ animals in with their own as if those animals belonged to them” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:3

The donkey of the fatherless they lead away; they take in pledge the ox of the widow

Job is not referring to a specific **donkey**, **fatherless** person, **ox**, or **widow**. He means those animals and people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "Wicked people lead away donkeys that belong to fatherless people; they take in pledge oxen that belong to widows" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the fatherless

Job is using the adjective **fatherless** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "children whose fathers have died" or "orphans" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

they take in pledge

See the note to [22:6](#) about the cultural practice of taking possessions **in pledge**. See how you translated the similar expression there. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:4

They turn the needy from the way

This could mean: (1) that needy people avoid walking on the main road or **way** in order to avoid wicked people who would exploit them. In that sense, it is as if the wicked people are actively forcing the needy people off the road. Alternate translation: "Needy people stay off the main roads in order to avoid wicked people" (2) that wicked people push needy people aside on the road so that they can go ahead of them. Alternate translation: "Wicked people push needy people aside on the road so that they can go ahead of them" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the needy & the poor of

Job is using the adjectives **needy** and **poor** as nouns to mean certain groups of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "needy people ... the poor people of" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the poor of the land are hidden together

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Wicked people are the implied agent. Job is not saying simply that poor people hide themselves to avoid the wicked; he is saying that wicked people force poor people to hide themselves to escape oppression. Alternate translation: "all the poor people of the land have to hide in order to avoid the wicked people who would oppress them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 24:5

like} wild donkeys in the wilderness they go out in their work

The point of this comparison is that the need to escape from oppressive wicked people forces poor people to go far away from human community, **like wild donkeys in the wilderness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “like wild donkeys in the wilderness, far away from human community,” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

they go out

Here and through verse 8, the pronoun **they** refers to poor people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “poor people go out” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

is} to him bread for their children

The pronoun **him** does not refer to a specific poor person. Job means poor people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “provides them with bread for their children” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

is} to him bread for their children

Job is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use a general term in your translation, or you could name the kind of food that people would find in the **Arabah** or desert. Alternate translation: “provides them with roots and herbs to feed to their children” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 24:6

They gather his fodder in the field, and the vineyard of the wicked they glean

The pronoun **him** could refer to: (1) the wicked person whom Job mentions in the second part of the verse. If that is the meaning, it may be helpful to mention the wicked person in the first part of the verse instead. Alternate translation: "Poor people gather fodder for their animals from what the wicked person has left in his field, and they glean in his vineyard" (2) an individual poor person. Alternate translation: "Each of these poor people gathers his fodder in the field, and they all glean the vineyard of the wicked" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and the vineyard of the wicked

Job is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "and the vineyard of a wicked person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and the vineyard of the wicked

Job is not referring to a specific **wicked** person. He means wicked people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "and the vineyards of wicked people" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 24:7

naked

As in [22:6](#), the word **naked** here does not mean without any clothing. Rather, as the context indicates, it means without sufficient clothing, in this case **without** an outer **garment** that would also serve as a blanket. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “exposed” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

without a garment

The poor people whom Job is talking about may be **without a garment** because: (1) wicked people have taken their outer garments in pledge and not returned them, as Eliphaz describes in [22:6](#). This would suit the context, in which Job is describing how wicked people oppress poor people. Alternate translation: “without a garment because wicked people have taken their garments in pledge and not returned them” (2) they are too poor to afford outer garments. Alternate translation: “without outer garments because they have become too poor to afford them” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:8

and from {being} without shelter

In this instance, the word **without** means “without any other.” You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and because they have no other shelter,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

they hug the rock

Job is not referring to a specific **rock**. He means rocks in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “they hug the rocks” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

they hug the rock

Job is using this expression to mean that poor people huddle up close to rocks in order to seek shelter from the rain. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they huddle up close to rocks” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 24:9

They snatch & they bind {a pledge

The pronoun **They** in the first part of the verse and the pronoun **they** in the second part of the verse refer to wicked people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Wicked people snatch ... wicked people bind a pledge” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the fatherless & the poor

Job is using the adjectives **fatherless** and **poor** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “fatherless children ... poor people” or “children whose fathers have died ... people who are poor” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

They snatch the fatherless from the breast

Job implicitly means that wicked people snatch **fatherless** children **from the breast** of their mother, that is, while they are nursing, in order to claim the children as slaves in payment of a debt. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Wicked people even take infants away from their mothers while they are nursing, in order to claim the children as slaves in payment of a debt” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and upon the poor they bind {a pledge

See how you translated the similar expression in [22:6](#). Alternate translation: “and they require the poor to give them their outer garments as security for loans” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:10

They go about & they carry

The pronoun **They** in the first part of the verse and the pronoun **they** in the second part of the verse refer to poor people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "Poor people go about ... poor people carry" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

They go about naked, without clothing

As in 22:6, the word **naked** here does not mean without any clothing. Job is describing the result of what he said at the end of the previous verse, that wicked people "bind a pledge" upon the poor, that is, they take their outer garments as security for loans. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Because wicked people take their outer garments in pledge, poor people go about exposed to the elements, not having sufficient clothing" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and, hungry, they carry a sheaf

Job is not referring to a specific **sheaf**. He means sheaves in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "and, hungry, they carry sheaves" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and, hungry, they carry a sheaf

Job is saying that poor people must try to earn money to feed themselves by working as day laborers, harvesting the grain in the fields of wicked people. But those poor people still go **hungry**, even with all that food around them, because the wicked people do not pay or feed their workers adequately. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and they are hungry, even though they work as harvesters, because the wicked people who own the fields they are harvesting do not pay or feed them adequately" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:11

Within their walls they press oil; they tread their winepresses, but they thirst

In this verse, the pronoun **they** refers to poor people and the pronoun **their** refers to wicked people. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Within the walls of wicked people, poor people press oil; poor people tread the winepresses of wicked people, but those poor people suffer thirst” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

they press oil

Job is referring to the way that workers would **press oil** from olives, which were a staple food in this culture. You could indicate that explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. You could also use a general expression if your readers might not be familiar with olives. Alternate translation: “they press oil from olives” or “they work hard to produce oil from plants” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 1143)**)

they tread their winepresses, but they thirst

Job is commenting here on the injustice of wicked people having poor people **tread their winepresses** but then not giving them any of the wine to drink. (In this culture, the water was often unsafe to drink. People drank wine to quench their thirst, and, because the wine had a low alcohol content, they could do that without getting drunk. Job is not saying that the wicked people should have given the poor people wine so that they could get drunk, only that they should have given them wine to quench their thirst.) See how you expressed the implicit meaning in the previous verse, where Job described how poor people carried grain but went hungry. Alternate translation: “they are thirsty, even though they work treading winepresses, because the wicked people who own the presses do not give them any of the wine to quench their thirst” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:12

men

Here the masculine term **men** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “men and women” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

and the soul of the wounded cries out

Job is using the adjective **wounded** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “and the souls of wounded people cry out” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and the soul of the wounded cries out

Job is using one part of a **wounded** person, his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of crying out. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and wounded people cry out” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and the soul of the wounded cries out

Job implicitly means that these people are crying out to God for justice. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and wounded people cry out to God for justice” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

but God does not ascribe impropriety

Job implicitly means that God seems to feel that there is nothing wrong with what the wicked people are doing, and so God does not punish them in response to the poor people's cries for justice. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “but God does not punish the wicked people who have caused their suffering” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:13

They & they do not regard & and they do not stay

The pronoun **They** at the start of the verse and the two instances of the pronoun **they** later in the verse refer to the wicked people whom Job has been describing. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “These wicked people ... these wicked people ... and they do not stay” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

against} the light

Job is speaking as if **light** were an authority and these wicked people were **rebelling** against it. Job is using light to represent what God has revealed to humans about how they should live. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “against God’s moral revelation” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they do not regard its ways, and they do not stay in its paths

Job is speaking as if **light** maintained certain **ways** and **paths** that people should walk along. He means that God’s revelation shows people how they should conduct their lives. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they do not regard the manner of life that God has shown people they should follow; no, they live in a different way” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they do not regard its ways

Here the word **regard** means “look at” with the implication of looking with approval. Alternate translation: “they do not admire its ways” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and they do not stay in its paths

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this as a positive expression. Alternate translation: “and they leave its paths” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 24:14

At light

This expression describes the time of day when it is just beginning to get **light**. There is enough light for the **murderer** to see, but not enough light for him to be identified. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "In the morning twilight," (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the murderer arises; he kills & he is like a thief

Job is not referring to a specific **murderer**. He means murderers in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "murderers arise; they kill ... they are like thieves" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the poor and the needy

Job is using the adjectives **poor** and **needy** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "poor people and needy people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the poor and the needy

The terms **poor** and **needy** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "desperately poor people" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

and he is like a thief in the night

The point of this comparison is that the **murderer** escapes apprehension because he commits his crime in dim light and at a time when people are sleeping. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "and he is like a thief in the night, whom no one sees commit his crime" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 24:15

And the eye of the adulterer

Job is using one part of an **adulterer**, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of watching. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And the adulterer" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the adulterer

Job is not referring to a specific **adulterer**. He is describing the behavior that is characteristic of any adulterer. It may be more natural in your language to make **adulterer** an indefinite noun rather than a definite one. Alternate translation: "an adulterer" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

saying, 'No eye will perceive me

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "saying to himself that no one will perceive him" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

No eye will perceive me

The characteristic adulterer is using one part of someone who might **perceive** him, that person's **eye**, to mean all of that person in the act of perceiving him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "No one will perceive me" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and he puts a cover {over} {his} face

Job is not speaking of a **cover** that would keep the **adulterer** from seeing. He is speaking of a disguise intended to keep people from recognizing who the adulterer is. You could express this in a way that would be familiar in your culture. Alternate translation: "and he pulls his hat down low over his face" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:16

One digs {into} houses

The pronoun **One** refers to a wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Since, as the rest of the verse shows, Job is actually describing behavior that is characteristic of wicked people in general, you may wish to use a plural term. Alternate translation: “Wicked people dig into houses” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

One digs {into} houses in the darkness

In this culture, **houses** were made of clay or sun-dried brick, so thieves could gain entry to a house most easily by digging through one of its walls. If houses in your culture are made of different materials that a thief would not or could not dig through, you may wish to use a general expression in your translation. Alternate translation: “Wicked people break into houses” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

they shut themselves up

This expression means “they stay indoors.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they stay indoors” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

they do not know the light

This expression means that wicked people are not familiar with **light**, and the reason is that they do not leave their homes when it is light. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they do not go out when it is light” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

they do not know the light

While the word **light** here is literal, since Job is using it to mean **day**, there is also a moral overtone, as in verse 13, where Job said that wicked people rebel against the light, meaning God’s revelation. If your language has a term for “light” that also has these moral connotations, it would be appropriate to use it here in your translation. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:17

For together, morning for them

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said in the preceding verse that wicked people do not go out during the day. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “They do not go out because for all of them, morning” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

morning for them {is} deep darkness

Job is speaking as if **morning** were literally **deep darkness** for wicked people. He means that they dread and avoid morning just as honest people dread and avoid the night. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they dread the morning as if it were deep darkness” (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

for them {& one regards

The pronoun **them** refers to wicked people, and the pronoun **one** refers to a representative or characteristic wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “for wicked people ... each one of them regards” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

one regards

As in [24:13](#), here the word **regards** means “looks at” with the implication of looking with approval. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “each one of them admires” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 24:18

He (is} swift on the face of the waters

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, at this point in his speech, Job implicitly begins to draw a contrast between the present situation of wicked people and their ultimate fate. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: “Nevertheless, he is swift” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

He (is} swift on the face of the waters

Job is speaking as if the surface of the **waters** were literally their **face**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “He (is} swift on the surface of the waters” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

He (is} swift on the face of the waters

Job is speaking as if a wicked person were literally something light that would float on the surface of the **waters** of a brook or river and pass swiftly downstream. He means that a wicked person only flourishes for a short time and then is gone. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Since Job speaks of wicked people in the plural in the next phrase, you may wish to use the plural in this phrase as well. Alternate translation: “Wicked people flourish only for a short time, then they are gone, like debris that water carries swiftly downstream” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

one does not turn {to} the way of their vineyards

This expression means that no one goes to work in the **vineyards** of wicked people. Since Job says in verse 13 that poor people do work in their vineyards, he is talking here about what will happen to wicked people in the future. Alternate translation: “their vineyards will be abandoned” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 24:19

Drought and heat strip away the waters of snow; Sheol, {those who} have sinned

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Job is drawing a comparison. Alternate translation: "Just as drought and heat strip away the waters of snow, so Sheol strips away those who have sinned." (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

strip away the waters of snow

Job is speaking as if, in the hot season, **Drought** and **heat** literally **strip away** the **waters** in his arid region that come from melting **snow** in the mountains. He means that the heat makes these waters evaporate. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "make water from melted snow evaporate" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 24:20

The womb will forget him, the worm will dine on him, until he is not remembered

The pronouns **him** and **he** refers to a wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "The womb will forget a wicked person, the worm will dine on that person, until he is not remembered" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

The womb will forget him

Job is using the term **womb** by association to mean the mother who carried the wicked person in her womb and gave birth to him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "As for a wicked person, even his own mother will forget him" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the worm will dine on him

The term translated **dine** means to eat with enjoyment. Job is describing an ironic consequence that wicked people will experience. During their lives, as he said earlier, they had oil and wine and grain that they enjoyed but did not share with others. Now, after death, they provide a satisfying meal for the worms that eat them in their graves. Your language may have a term similar to **dine** that you could use in your translation. (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

until he is not remembered and wickedness is broken like a tree

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "until no one remembers him and wickedness is like a tree that a windstorm has broken" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and wickedness is broken like a tree

The point of this comparison is that just as a **tree** may be **broken** (by a powerful wind, for example) so that it falls over and dies, so a wicked person will lose his possessions and status and ultimately die. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "and wickedness is broken, just as a windstorm knocks down a tree and it dies" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 24:21

the one devouring the barren

The pronoun **one** refers to a wicked person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "A wicked person devours the barren" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the one devouring

Job is speaking as if a wicked person would literally devour or eat up childless women and widows. He means that the wicked person would cheat and exploit them in the ways he described earlier in this speech. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the one exploiting" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the barren, who has not borne

Job is using the adjective **barren** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "the barren woman, who has not borne" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the barren, who has not borne

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: "the childless woman" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

the barren, who has not borne

Job is not referring to a specific **barren** woman. He means women in general who have not had children. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "childless women" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and he does not do good {to} the widow

Job is not referring to a specific **widow**. He means widows in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "and he does not do good to widows" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and he does not do good {to} the widow

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this as a positive expression. Alternate translation: "and he harms the widow" or "and he harms widows" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 24:22

But he drags away the mighty by his power

In this first part of the verse, the pronouns **he** and **his** refer to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "But God drags away the mighty by his power" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

But he drags away

Job is speaking as if God literally **drags away** people who are **mighty**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "But he destroys" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the mighty

Job is using the adjective **mighty** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "mighty people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

he arises and he does not believe in life

Interpreters are uncertain as to whom the pronoun **he** refers in the two instances in the second part of this verse. This could mean: (1) that God **arises** against mighty people, so that each one of them realizes that he is doomed. Alternate translation: "God arises against them, so that each one of them despairs of life" (2) that a wicked person **arises** or prospers for a time, but he has no assurance of a long life. Alternate translation: "a wicked person may prosper for a time, but he has no assurance of a long life" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 24:23

He gives him security and he is supported, but his eyes are on their ways

The pronoun **He** in its first instance and the pronoun **his** refer to God, and the pronoun **he** in its second instance and the pronoun **him** refer to a wicked person. The pronoun **them** refers to wicked people in general. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God gives a wicked person security, and that person is supported, but God’s eyes are on the ways of wicked people” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

He gives him security and he is supported

If your language would not use the passive form **he is supported**, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you would need to say who does the action, the context indicates that it is God. Alternate translation: “God gives him security and supports him” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

He gives him security and he is supported

These two phrases mean similar things. Job is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them. While Job seems to say that God actively **gives** security and support to wicked people, the idea is that God actually allows these things. Alternate translation: “God may allow a wicked person to feel a sense of security” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

but his eyes are on their ways

Job is using one part of God, his **eyes**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. Sight, in turn, represents awareness. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “but he watches their ways carefully” or “but he is very aware of their ways” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

but his eyes are on their ways

Job is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** or path that the person was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “but he is very aware of how wicked people are living” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 24:24

They are exalted

The pronoun **They** (or **they**) refers to wicked people in all of its instances in this verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers in the first instance. Alternate translation: "Wicked people are exalted" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

They are exalted

Job is speaking of wicked people as if they were literally **exalted** or raised up to a high position. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They achieve greatness" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

They are exalted

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "They achieve greatness" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

a little

This could mean: (1) that wicked people are exalted for a **little** while. Alternate translation: "for a short time" (2) that wicked people are exalted a **little** bit. Alternate translation: "to a limited extent" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

indeed, they are brought low

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "indeed, God brings them low" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

then there is not to them

This expression means that these "mighty" people no longer exist. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "then they no longer exist" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

indeed, they are brought low

Job is speaking as if wicked people were literally **brought low** or moved down to a low position. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Since this phrase repeats the meaning of **then they do not exist**, the meaning seems to be that they die. Alternate translation: "indeed, they die" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

like all, they are gathered and, like the tops of ears of grain, they are cut off

The phrase **they are gathered** could be: (1) a characteristic Hebrew expression that describes death. Alternate translation: "like all people, they are die; yes, like the tops of ears of grain, they are cut off" (2) part of the comparison to **ears of grain**. In that case, it would be appropriate to translate it literally. Alternate translation: "like all people, they are gathered and cut off like the tops of ears of grain" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

like all, they are gathered and, like the tops of ears of grain, they are cut off

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: (1) "God gathers them among the dead, as he does all people; yes, God cuts them off like the tops of ears of grain" or (2) "as he does to all people, God gathers them and cuts them off like the tops of ears of grain" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 24:25

And if not, then who will falsify me and make my word nothing

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "And if anyone believes that what I have said is not true, then I challenge him to prove me wrong and show that what I have said is not valid" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

And if not

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "And if what I am saying is not true" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and make my word nothing

This expression means to show that something is of no value, that is, not valid. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and show that my word is not valid" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

my word

Job is using the term **word** to mean what he has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what I have said" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 25

Job 25 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the third and final speech of Job's friend Bildad.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

The brevity of Bildad's speech

This speech by Bildad is much shorter than his first two speeches. It is also much shorter than the three speeches that Eliphaz has given to this point in the book and the two speeches that Zophar has given. The likely explanation is that Job's friends are running out of things to say to him. Indeed, Zophar does not give a third speech at all. The narrator says in [32:3](#) that the three friends "found no answer" for Job's arguments. The brevity of Bildad's third speech and the absence of a third speech by Zophar dramatize this. Since the narrator eventually offers an explanation, it would not be necessary to put an explanation in your translation at the end of this chapter such as, "And that was all that Job's friends had to say to him."

God's holiness and human sinfulness

In this short speech, Bildad describes God's holiness and human sinfulness. While the points he makes are accurate, they are not convincing for Job, because he has actually been righteous. (See: [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/holy\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc://tw/dict/bible/kt/sin\]\]](#) and **righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness (p.1311)**)

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Bildad using the words of Eliphaz

Although Bildad speaks only briefly, he repeats significant phrases from Eliphaz's first and second speeches. Bildad asks in verse 4, "So how will a man be righteous with God? Or how will one born of a woman be pure?" Eliphaz had asked similarly in 4:17, "Will a man be more righteous than God? If a man will be more pure than his Maker?" and in 15:14, "What is man, that he should be pure, or that one born of a woman should be righteous?" To show this, it would be helpful to use the same wording in your translation of 25:4 that you used in 4:17 and 15:14.

Job 25:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 25:2

Dominion and fear {are} with him

The pronoun **him** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Dominion and awe are with God” or “God possesses dominion and awe” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Dominion and fear {are} with him

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **fear** tells what response God’s **Dominion** produces in those who recognize its powerful and holy character. (In this context, the word **fear** describes reverence and respect for God and awe at his greatness.) If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “Fearful dominion is with him” or “Awesome dominion is with him” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Dominion and fear {are} with him

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **Dominion** and **fear**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: “God rules in a way that inspires great respect” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the one making peace in his heights

The word translated **peace** could mean: (1) harmonious order. Alternate translation: “the one who establishes harmonious order” (2) the absence of conflict. Alternate translation: “the one who rules without opposition” or “the one who rules without rebellion” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in his heights

See how you translated the same expression in [16:19](#). Alternate translation: “in his highest heaven” or “in heaven, where he rules supremely” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 25:3

Is there a number to his troops? And upon whom does his light not arise

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "There is no number to his troops! His light arises on everyone!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Is there a number to his troops

In this verse, Bildad is describing God's greatness by saying that at night, there are too many stars in the sky to count, and by day, the sun shines all over the world. So in this context, the word **troops** implicitly refers to the stars as if they were soldiers. Alternate translation: "Is there a number to the stars?" or "There are too many stars in the sky to count!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

And upon whom does his light not arise

Bildad is using the term **light** by association to mean the sun. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And upon whom does the sun not rise?" or "And the sun shines on everyone!" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 25:4

So how will a man be righteous with God? Or how will one born of a woman be pure

Bildad is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "A man cannot be righteous with God! One born of a woman cannot be clean!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "a person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

one born of a woman

See how you translated this expression in [15:14](#). Alternate translation: "a mortal" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 25:5

the moon does not shine

Bildad implicitly means that compared with God's holiness, the **moon** does not **shine** with the brightness of a pure, holy thing. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "the moon has no holy brightness" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in his eyes

Bildad is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. Sight, in turn, represents attention, perspective, and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "in his perspective" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 25:6

Indeed that a man, a worm

Indeed that is an expression that indicates that what follows is greater in degree than what a person has just said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “How much less a man, a worm” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Indeed that a man, a worm

Bildad is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “How much less could a man, a worm, be pure” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

a man, & or a son of man

Although the terms **man** and **son** are masculine, here both words have a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use terms in your language that are clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “a human ... or a human child” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

a man, a worm

Bildad is speaking as if a human were literally a **worm**. He probably means that humans are lowly, just as worms are lowly, living in the dirt. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “that lowly creature” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

or a son of man, a grub

Bildad is similarly speaking as if a human were literally a **grub**. Once again the basis of the comparison seems to be that just as grubs live in the earth, God originally formed humans from the earth. So this is a parallel poetic reference to human mortality. Rather than repeat the image, it may be more natural in your language to translate this as an explanatory phrase. Alternate translation, not preceded by a comma: “whom God formed from the earth” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 26

Job 26 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter begins a long response by Job first to Bildad's last speech and then to the friends in general. Bildad had spoken briefly of the greatness of God. Job shows that he is a truly godly man who appreciates God's greatness by describing it in this chapter at greater length and in more eloquent language. Job told the friends in 12:3 that he had just as much wisdom as they did, and he demonstrates that in this chapter.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Litany

In verses 7–9, Job makes a series of statements about God that have a similar form. A series of statements such as this is known as a litany. If your readers would recognize what Job is doing, you can translate and format this litany the way the ULT does. If the litany form would not be familiar to your readers, you could help them appreciate it by putting each sentence of the litany on a separate line. See what you did with the similar litany in chapter 12. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could make each verse in the litany a separate sentence. For example, you could begin verse 7, "God stretches out." Notes to verses 7–9 offer further suggestions.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Reference of "he," "him," and "his"

The pronouns "he," "him," and "his" all refer to God throughout this chapter. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could specify the referent and say "God" or "God's" at regular intervals for clarity.

Job 26:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 26:2

How you have helped {the one} without power! You have saved the arm of no strength

For emphasis, Job is saying the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what Job actually means. Alternate translation: "You have not helped the one without power! You have not saved the arm of no strength" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

How you have helped {the one} without power! You have saved the arm of no strength

Job is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "You have not helped me, even though I was without power! You have not saved me, even though my arm had no strength" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

you have helped {& You have saved

In this verse, as well as in verses 3 and 4, the word **you** is singular because Job is addressing Bildad directly. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

the arm of no strength

Job is using one part of himself, his **arm**, to mean all of him as someone who is struggling to have **strength** during difficulties. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "a person of no strength" or "me, even though I had no strength" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 26:3

How you have advised {one} without wisdom! Insight in abundance, you have made known

For emphasis, Job is continuing to say the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what Job actually means. Alternate translation: "You have not really advised one without wisdom! You have not really made known insight in abundance" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

How you have advised {one} without wisdom

Job is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "You have not really advised me, even though I was without wisdom" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Job 26:4

With whom did you declare words? And the breath of whom came out from you

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Someone must have helped you declare those words! Someone else's breath must have come out from you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

With whom did you declare words? And the breath of whom came out from you

Job is implying that God must have helped Bildad speak, although he does not really mean it (see next note). You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "God must have helped you declare those words! God's own breath must have come out from you!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

With whom did you declare words? And the breath of whom came out from you

For emphasis, Job is continuing to say the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what Job actually means. Alternate translation: "You are merely sharing human opinions! You have no divinely granted insights!" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

With whom did you declare words

Job is using the term **words** to mean what Bildad has just said by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God must have helped you say what you did!" or, showing that Job is saying the opposite of what he means, "What you said was merely your own human opinion" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

And the breath of whom came out from you

The word translated **breath** can also mean "spirit," so this could mean: (1) that Job is making a parallel statement to the first part of the verse, using the **breath** that comes out of a person's mouth while he is speaking to mean the act of speaking itself. Alternate translation: "And who was speaking with you as you spoke" or "And who enabled you to speak so well" or "It is certainly not as if God was helping you speak!" (2) that Job is suggesting (while meaning the opposite of what he is saying) that an angel or God's Spirit must have inspired Bildad to say what he did. Alternate translation: "And what spirit inspired you to speak so well" or "And was it not God's Spirit who inspired you to speak so well" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 26:5

The Raphaites tremble

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, at this point in this speech, Job begins a description of the greatness of God. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “But as for the greatness of God, the Raphaites tremble” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 1143)**)

from below the waters and the ones inhabiting them

Job implicitly means that the spirits of dead people **tremble** from their abode in Sheol, which he names specifically in the next verse but which he identifies by its location in this verse. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “from their abode deep below the sea, deep below the creatures that live in the sea” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 26:6

Sheol {is} naked before him

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the pronoun **him** in this verse refers to God, as do the pronouns “he,” “him,” and “his” throughout the chapter. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, here and at selected other places in the chapter. Alternate translation: “Sheol is naked before God” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p. 1267)**)

Sheol {is} naked before him

Job is speaking of **Sheol** as if it were literally not wearing any clothing. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Sheol is open before God” or “God can look right into Sheol” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and {there is} no covering to Abaddon

The word **Abaddon**, which means “destruction,” is another name for Sheol. (See: **How to Translate Names (p. 1196)**)

and {there is} no covering to Abaddon

Job is speaking as if it might be possible to put an actual **covering** over **Abaddon** to keep God from seeing into it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and nothing keeps God from seeing into Abaddon” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 26:7

the one stretching out the north over nothingness, hanging the earth upon nothing

Job is using the two major components of creation, the sky (which he calls the **north**) and the **earth**, to mean all of creation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language.

Alternate translation: “the one having made all of creation where previously nothing was” (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

the one stretching out the north over nothingness, hanging the earth upon nothing

Job is speaking as if God had literally stretched out the **north** (the sky) over **nothingness** and hung the **earth** on **nothing**. Since he speaks of the “pillars” of the heavens in verse 11, he is probably not saying directly that the sky and the earth are suspended over empty space. Instead, he is probably referring to God having created the sky and the land by bringing order to watery chaos. Job says this specifically in verses 12 and 13. Alternate translation: “the one having created the sky and the land by bringing order to watery chaos” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the one stretching out

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, this is the beginning of a litany that extends through verse 9. See that discussion and the notes to verses 7–9 for suggestions of how to present this material in a way that may be helpful to your readers. (See: **Litany (p.1230)**)

the one stretching out

The pronoun **one** refers to God, not to Abaddon. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “God is the one stretching out” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the north

Job is using the term **north** by association to mean the bright constellations in the northern sky, and so by further association the stars, and by even further association the sky itself, where the stars appear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the sky” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 26:8

the one binding the waters in his clouds, but the cloud is not torn under them

Job is speaking as if God literally uses **clouds** to bind or tie up the waters that eventually fall from those clouds to earth as rain. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, as a new sentence: “God makes rainclouds that contain much water” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

but the cloud is not torn under them

Job is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means clouds, specifically rainclouds, in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “but those rainclouds are not torn under those waters” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

but the cloud is not torn under them

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “but those waters do not tear the clouds under them” or “but the weight of those waters does not tear the clouds apart” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 26:9

the face of

Job is speaking as if the surface of the **moon** were literally its **face**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the surface of” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

his cloud

Job is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means all the clouds that God would use to cover the moon. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “his clouds” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 26:10

He has circled a limit on the face of the waters

Job is speaking as if the surface of the **waters** or oceans were literally their **face**. He is describing the horizon, which, to a land-bound observer, seems to be a limit on how far the oceans extend. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God has placed a circular limit on the surface of the oceans" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

unto the boundary of light with darkness

Job implicitly means that the **limit** that God has placed on the extent of the oceans coincides with the bottom of the dome of the sky, which people in this culture considered to be a solid object. Beneath the dome, in which the sun, moon, and stars shone, there was light. Beyond the dome was darkness. So Job is using **the boundary of light with darkness** to refer by association to the sky. You could indicate this in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "at the bottom of the dome of the sky" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 26:11

The pillars of the heavens tremble and marvel at his rebuke

Many interpreters believe that here Job is speaking of high mountains as if they were the **pillars of the heavens**, since they appear to hold up the sky. Job would also be speaking as if God were literally issuing a **rebuke** to the mountains and that in response, they **tremble and marvel**. The reference may be to an earthquake, which causes mountains to shake. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God sends earthquakes that make even the high mountains shake" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

tremble and marvel

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **marvel**, a reference to being astonished by the power of God, tells why the pillars of the heavens **tremble**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use "and." Alternate translation: "shake with fear" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 26:12

he shattered Rahab

See how you translated the name Rahab in [9:13](#). Alternate translation: "he defeated the sea monster that is associated with chaos" (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

Job 26:13

By his breath the skies {become} clearness

Job is probably speaking as if strong winds, which clear the clouds from the sky after a storm, are the **breath** of God. Even though the word translated **breath** can also mean “wind” or “Spirit,” Job is probably using a poetic image rather than a literal statement to describe the power of God. If it would be more natural in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God sends strong winds to clear the sky of clouds after a storm” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the fleeing serpent

The expression **the fleeing serpent** is another name for the sea monster. (In [Isaiah 27:1](#), the sea monster is called “the fleeing serpent” and Leviathan.) See how you translated the name Leviathan in [3:8](#) and the name Rahab in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “the sea monster that is associated with chaos” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

his hand pierced the fleeing serpent

Job is using one part of God, his **hand**, to mean all of him in the act of doing combat with the chaos monster. He means that with a weapon such as a sword, God **pierced** the monster, that is, stabbed it to death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in combat, he killed the chaos monster” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 26:14

are the edges of his ways

Job is speaking of the things that God does as if they were **ways** or paths that God was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “are a small part of his actions” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and how small a word we hear of him

Job may be using the term **word** in the sense of the sound of a word, in which case the term **small** would indicate a faint sound or whisper. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and how faint a whisper we hear of him” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

And the thunder of his power, who will understand

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “No, no one can understand the thunder of his power!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

And the thunder of his power

Job is using this possessive form to describe **thunder** that is characterized by **power**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “And his powerful thunder” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 27

Job 27 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad and the other two friends. - Verses 1-10: Job insists that he is godly and will continue to live that way - Verses 11-23: Job describes how God punishes wicked people

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Reference of "he," "him," and "his"

From verse 14 through to the end of the chapter, the pronouns "he," "him," and "his" refer to the "wicked man" whom Job first mentions in verse 13. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could specify the referent and say "a wicked man" at regular intervals for clarity. Notes suggest how you might do this at various places.

Job 27:1

And Job continued to take up his discourse, and he said

The narrator is speaking as if Job's **discourse** or speech were an object that he could **take up** or pick up. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "As Job continued his speech, he said" or "Job continued speaking and he said" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 27:2

As} God lives, {who} has taken away my justice, the Almighty, {who} has made my life bitter

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "As God lives, who has taken away my justice; as the Almighty lives, who has made my life bitter" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

As} God lives, {who} has taken away my justice, the Almighty, {who} has made my life bitter

Job is swearing an oath in the way that was characteristic in his culture. In your translation, you can translate this in the way that would be characteristic in your culture. Alternate translation: "I swear by God, who has turned away my justice; I swear by the Almighty, who has made my life bitter" (See: **Oath Formulas (p.1248)**)

who} has taken away my justice

Job is speaking of his **justice** as if it were an object that God had **taken away** from him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "who has denied justice to me" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 27:3

that

Job is using the word **that** to introduce the content of the oath that he began to swear in the previous verse. In some cases, if you translated the previous verse to reflect the way people swear oaths in your culture, you may not need to include the word **that** here. If you chose to reflect the way Job swore this oath following the practices of his own culture, it may be helpful to show what he is using the word **that** to mean. Alternate translation: "I swear that" (See: **Oath Formulas (p.1248)**)

and breath from God {being} in my nose

Job is using the **breath** in his **nose** by association to mean breathing, and he is using breathing by association to mean being alive. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and for as long as I draw the breath of life" or "and for as long as I am alive" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 27:4

if my lips speak wickedness, or my tongue, if it utters deceit

This is the conclusion of the oath that Job is swearing. In this culture, people would swear an oath by stating the first part of a condition but not the second part. (But see the General Notes to chapter 31, which explain how Job does state the second part of many conditions in the oaths that he swears in that chapter.) If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explicitly state the implied second part of the condition. Alternate translation: “if my lips speak wickedness, or if my tongue utters deceit, may God punish me severely!” (See: **Oath Formulas (p.1248)**)

if my lips speak wickedness, or my tongue, if it utters deceit

Job is using parts of himself, his **lips** and his **tongue**, to mean all of him in the act of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “if I speak wickedness or utter deceit” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

if my lips speak wickedness, or my tongue, if it utters deceit

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **wickedness** and **deceit**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: “if I say anything that is wicked or deceitful” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 27:5

Sacrilege to me if I justify you

Job is using this expression to mean that he would no more **justify** his friends (that is, agree that they are right) than he would commit a **Sacrilege**, that is, do something that he knew would be offensive to God in a religious sense. Your language may have an expression with a similar sense that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “God forbid that I justify you” or “Far be it from me to justify you” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

you

The word **you** is plural here because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

I expire

See how you translated the term **expire** in [3:11](#). Alternate translation: “I pass away” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

I will not turn my integrity away from me

Job is speaking as if his **integrity**, meaning in this case his conviction that he has been acting properly, were a person whom he could **turn away** and make go somewhere else. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I will keep insisting that I have been acting properly” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 27:6

I grasp my righteousness and I will not let it go

Job is speaking as if his **righteousness** were literally an object that he was holding onto. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am going to continue to insist that I am righteous" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

my heart will not reproach {me

Job is speaking as if his **heart**, which in this context represents his conscience, were a person who might **reproach** him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will not have a guilty conscience" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

my heart will not reproach {me

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **reproach**. Alternate translation: "I will be confident that I have acted properly" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

from my days

Job is using this expression to describe his lifetime. He means the period extending from his earliest **days** of life to the present. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "for as long as I live" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 27:7

May my enemy be like the wicked, and the one rising up against me like the unrighteous

In this culture, people would make clear that they did not want something to happen to them by saying they wanted it to happen to their enemies. That showed that it was the opposite of what they wanted for themselves. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I do not want to be anything like the wicked or the unrighteous" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

like the wicked, & like the unrighteous

Job is using the adjectives **wicked** and **unrighteous** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "like wicked people ... like unrighteous people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and the one rising up against me like the unrighteous

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and may the one rising up against me be like the unrighteous" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and the one rising up against me

Job is speaking as if this person were literally **rising up**, that is, standing up from a seating or lying position, in order to attack him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and the one opposing me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 27:8

For what {is} the hope of the godless when he cuts {him} off, when God takes away his life

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "For the godless has no hope when he cuts him off, when God takes away his life." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

For what {is} the hope of the godless

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **hope**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "For what does the godless hope for" or, as a statement, "For the godless has nothing to hope for" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the godless

Job is using the adjective **godless** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "a godless person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

when he cuts {him} off, when God takes away his life

As the context makes clear, the pronoun **he** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers by naming God in the first part of the verse and using a pronoun in the second part of the verse. Alternate translation: "when God cuts him off, when he takes away his life" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he cuts {him} off

See how you translated the similar expression in [6:9](#). Alternate translation: "he kills him" or "God kills him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 27:9

Will God hear his cry when trouble comes upon him

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "God will not hear his cry when trouble comes upon him!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will God hear his cry

Job is using the term **hear** in a specific sense to mean "answer." Alternate translation: "Will God answer his cry for help" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

when trouble comes upon him

Job is speaking of **trouble** as if it were a living thing that could **come upon** a wicked person (for example, as an animal might pounce on its prey). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "when he experiences trouble" or "when he gets into trouble" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 27:10

If he will delight himself in the Almighty? Will he call {to} God in every time

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "He will not delight himself in the Almighty! He will not call to God in every time!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 27:11

you

The word **you** is plural here because Job is addressing his three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

about the hand of God

Here, **hand** represents the activity of a person by association with the way that people use their hands to do things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "about the activity of God" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

what {is} with the Almighty

Job is not using this expression to suggest that there are certain things **with** the Almighty, that is, objects that are in his presence. Rather, the expression refers to the things that pertain to the Almighty, meaning his characteristic ways of doing things. In this context, the expression refers to the way that the Almighty actually treats the wicked. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "how the Almighty does things" or "how the Almighty actually treats the wicked," (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

I will not conceal

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **conceal**. Alternate translation: "I will reveal" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

Job 27:12

you have seen {this} yourselves, all of you

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **you**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **know**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. The ULT does so by using the intensive pronoun **yourselves**. Alternate translation: “all of you have seen this quite clearly” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

you have seen {this} yourselves, all of you

In this context, to **see** means to “experience.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “all of you have experienced this quite consistently” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

why then do you vainly speak this vanity

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “therefore you should not vainly speak this vanity” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

why then do you vainly speak this vanity

For emphasis, Job is using a construction in which a subject and its verb come from the same root. You may be able to use the same construction in your language to express the meaning here. Alternatively, your language may have another way of showing the emphasis. Alternate translation: “why then do you speak this utter vanity” or, as a statement, “you should therefore not speak this utter vanity” (See: **Poetry (p.1255)**)

Job 27:13

This {is} the portion of a wicked man with God

Job is speaking as if the punishment that God assigns to a **wicked man** were literally a **portion** or share of goods that God allotted to that person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "This is the punishment that God assigns to a wicked man" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

a wicked man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "a wicked person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

and the heritage of oppressors, they receive {it} from the Almighty

Job is speaking as if the punishment that the Almighty assigns to **oppressors** were literally a **heritage** or inheritance that he leaves to them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and this is the punishment that oppressors receive from the Almighty" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 27:14

If his children multiply, {it is} for the sword

Job is using the term **sword** by association to mean death, since in this culture people killed others with swords. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Even if a wicked person has many children, they will all die" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

bread

Job is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "food" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 27:15

His survivor will be buried in death

The term **death** could mean: (1) death literally. Alternate translation: “His survivor will die and be buried” (2) a plague, in which case Job would be using a general term for death to mean one specific cause of death. There is a similar use in [Jeremiah 15:2](#). In that case Job could also be speaking as if the plague itself had buried this **survivor**, meaning that it had caused his death. Alternate translation: “His survivor will be buried by a plague” or “A plague will kill his survivor” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

His survivor

This could mean: (1) the wicked person’s last surviving descendant. Alternate translation: “his last survivor” or “the end of his line” (2) not a specific **survivor** but his surviving descendants in general. Alternate translation: “his descendants” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and his widows will not lament

In this culture, a man might marry more than one woman, so by **widows**, Job means implicitly that this “wicked man” had more than one wife. You may find it more suitable to use a singular form in your translation. Alternate translation: “and his widow will not lament” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 27:16

he heaps up silver like the dust and he piles up clothing like clay mounds

The point of this comparison is that just as **dust** is abundant and **clay mounds** contain great quantities of clay, so a wicked person might acquire **silver** in abundance and **clothing** in great quantities. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: “a wicked person acquires an abundant amount of silver and great quantities of clothing” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

silver

Job is using one valuable commodity, **silver**, to represent wealth in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “wealth” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 27:17

but the righteous & the innocent

Job is using the adjectives **righteous** and **innocent** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "but a righteous person ... an innocent person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 27:18

He builds his house as a moth {does}, and like a hut {that} a guard makes

The point of these comparisons is that the **house** of a **moth**, that is, its cocoon, is very fragile, as is a **hut** that a **guard** would build in a field out of branches to watch over crops during harvest time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "The house that he builds is as fragile as a moth's cocoon, as rickety as a hut that a guard would build out of branches" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

He builds his house as a moth {does}, and like a hut {that} a guard makes

While the actual house of a wicked person might become abandoned and collapse from neglect, Job could be using the term **house** to represent the life of that person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "The life that he creates for himself is as fragile as a moth's cocoon, as rickety as a hut that a guard would build from branches" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He builds his house as a moth {does}

A **moth** is a flying insect that is typically active at night. It begins life as a wingless larva. The larva eventually spins a silk cocoon around itself, and inside that cocoon, it changes into a flying moth. If your readers would not be familiar with what a moth is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable creature that your readers would recognize and that similarly builds a fragile structure. The UST models one way to do this. (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 27:19

He lies down rich, & he opens his eyes

Job is speaking of going to sleep and waking up by association with things that people do when they go to sleep (lie down in bed) and wake up (open their eyes). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He goes to sleep rich ... he wakes up" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

He lies down rich, & he opens his eyes

Job is making an overstatement to emphasize how quickly a wicked person loses his wealth. He is speaking as if that person would go to sleep rich and wake up with nothing, that is, as if he would lose all of his riches in a single night. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "He may be rich ... only a short time passes" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

but he does not continue

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "but he does not continue to be rich" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and there is not to him

This expression means that the wicked person no longer has any possessions. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he discovers that he no longer has any possessions" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 27:20

a storm carries him away in the night

Job is speaking as if a **storm** would literally carry a wicked person away. He means that that person perishes as quickly and unexpectedly as he would if a storm carried him away. It may be more natural in your language to represent this image as a comparison. Alternate translation: "he perishes quickly and unexpectedly, as if a storm had carried him away in the night" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 27:21

The east wind takes him away, and he leaves; indeed, it blasts him from his place

Job is continuing to speak as if a **wind** would literally pick up a wicked person and carry him away. If you decided to represent this image as a comparison in the previous verse, you can continue to do that in this verse. Alternate translation: "Yes, it is as if the east wind takes him away, blowing him right out of his home, so that he is gone" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

The east wind

Job lived in a place where there was desert to the **east**, so he is referring implicitly to a strong, hot wind coming from the desert. In your translation, you could refer to the direction from which the strongest and stormiest winds come in your area. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 27:22

And it hurls {itself} upon him and does not pity

Job is speaking of this wind as if it were a living thing that could hurl itself upon a wicked person and not **pity** him, that is, not show him any mercy. If you decided to represent this image as a comparison in the previous two verses, you can continue to do that in this verse. Alternate translation: "It is as if a violent wind is blowing against him relentlessly" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

fleeing, he flees

Job is repeating the verb "flee" in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. The specific sense here is that the wicked person is trying desperately to flee from this strong wind. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: "he tries desperately to escape" or "it is as if he is trying desperately to escape" (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

from its hand

Here, **hand** represents power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from its power" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 27:23

It claps its hands at him

In this culture, people would clap their hands together as a symbolic action to express negative emotions such as grief, indignation, or derision. In this context, Job is speaking as if the wind were expressing derision at the wicked person. If it would be helpful to your readers, particularly if people in your culture clap their hands together to express positive emotions such as approval and admiration, you could explain the significance of this action in your translation. You could also name a gesture that people in your culture use to express derision. Alternate translation: "It is as if such a wind claps its hands at him in derision" or "It is as if such a wind points its finger derisively at him" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

and hisses at him

In this culture, people would make a hissing sound in order to express derision. Job is speaking as if the wind were also expressing derision at the wicked person by making such a sound. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action in your translation. You could also name a sound that people in your culture make in order to express derision. Alternate translation: "and makes a derisive hissing sound" or "and laughs derisively at him" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

from his place

This could mean: (1) that the wind Job is describing **hisses** at the wicked person from within the home that it has forced him to abandon. (Job says of the wind in verse 21, "it blasts him from his place.") Alternate translation: "from within his former home, which this wind now occupies" (2) that the wind **hisses** at the wicked person now that he is out of **his place**. Alternate translation: "because he has had to abandon his home" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 28

Job 28 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Job's response to Bildad and the other two friends. In this part of his speech, Job discusses how people can obtain wisdom. Both he and his friends have stressed the importance of wisdom (for example, in 12:2, 15:8, and 26:3). Job says at the end of this eloquent discussion, "Behold, the fear of the Lord—that is wisdom, and to turn from evil is understanding." The implication is that Job, who prizes wisdom so much, would not have disrespected God, committed evil, and thus missed out on having wisdom. So in this chapter, Job gives another important defense of his innocence.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Reference of "it" in verses 13–18

Job introduces the subject of "wisdom" in verse 12. Then, from verse 14 through to the end of the chapter, he refers to wisdom most of the time with the pronouns "it" and "its." If it would be helpful to your readers, you could specify the referent and say "wisdom" at regular intervals for clarity. Notes suggest how you might do this at various places.

Job 28:1

and a place

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and surely there is a place” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

where} they refine gold

Here, **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: “where gold is refined” or “where people refine gold” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 28:2

Iron is taken from the dust

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "People take iron from the dust" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

from the dust

Job is using one part of the ground, the **dust** on its surface, to mean the ground itself. **Iron** is actually **taken** from deep in the ground. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from the ground" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and one smelts copper {from} stone

Job is speaking of the ore from which **copper** is **smelted** as **stone**, since that ore is a type of stone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and people smelt copper from ore" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and one smelts copper {from} stone

The term "smelt" means to break ore into pieces and to use great heat to melt it so that a metal such as **copper** will separate from it. If your readers would not be familiar with the process of smelting, you could describe it with a general expression in your translation. Alternate translation: "and people break up ore and melt it in order to extract copper from it" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 28:3

Setting an end to darkness

Job means implicitly that the person he is describing either brings lights underground, where there is otherwise **darkness**, or opens a mineshaft that lets light in. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Bringing torches underground” or “Opening a mine shaft” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

he is searching out, to every extremity, a stone of

The pronoun **he** refers to a person who is mining for precious metals. It does not refer back to anyone whom Job has mentioned previously. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “a miner searches, to every extremity, for a stone of” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he is searching out, to every extremity, a stone of

Job says **every** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “a miner searches everywhere he can to try to find a stone of” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

a stone of gloom and deep darkness

Job is using this possessive form to describe a **stone** that can only be found in **gloom and deep darkness**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “a stone that can only be found in gloom and deep darkness” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

a stone of gloom and deep darkness

Job is not referring to a specific **stone**. He means in general stone that contains precious metal, that is, ore. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “ore that can only be found in gloom and deep darkness” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

a stone of gloom and deep darkness

The terms **gloom** and **deep darkness** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “ore that can only be found where it is very dark” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

a stone of gloom and deep darkness

Job is using the phrase **gloom and deep darkness** by association to mean deep underground, where it is very dark. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “ore that can only be found deep underground” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 28:4

He opens a shaft away from habitation

The pronoun **He** refers once again to a person who is mining for precious metals. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Since Job uses plural forms in the rest of this verse, you may wish to use a plural form here. Alternate translation: “Miners open shafts” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

away from habitation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **habitation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “far from where people live” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the ones forgotten by the foot

Job is not referring to a specific **foot**. He means feet in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “the ones forgotten by feet” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the ones forgotten by the foot

Job is speaking of a **foot** as if it were a living thing that could be unaware of something. (That is what the term **forgotten** indicates here.) This could be describing: (1) the location of the mines. Job would be saying that they are in remote places where people do not go. In that case the word **foot** would represent people traveling. Alternate translation: “in places where people do not go”(2) the way that people walk on the ground above mines without realizing that miners are at work deep below them. Alternate translation, beginning a new sentence: “The people walking on the ground high above miners do not realize that they are there” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Away from man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “Away from other people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

they dangle and swing

Job means implicitly that these miners **dangle and swing** from ropes in order to get down into the mines. He is emphasizing the risks that people will take in order to find precious metals. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “they dangle and swing dangerously from ropes in order to get down into their mines” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 28:5

The earth, from it comes bread, but beneath it, it is overturned as with fire

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. In this verse, Job is drawing a contrast between the ordinary activities that take place on the surface of the earth and the extraordinary, dangerous activities that take place in mines below the earth.

Alternate translation: "People grow food on the surface of the earth, but below the surface, people transform the earth by means such as fire" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

bread

Job is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "food" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

it is overturned as with fire

Job is speaking as if miners literally **overturned** the earth, that is, put on top what had been on the bottom. He is speaking generally of how miners reshape the terrain in which they work. (This could include actual overturning in some cases.) If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the terrain is reshaped as with fire" or "miners reshape the terrain as with fire" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it is overturned as with fire

Job assumes that his friends will understand that he is using the term **fire** to refer to an ancient mining practice. Miners would build fires against the walls of mines to heat the rock. They would then splash water against the heated rock to cause it to crack. This allowed them to extract ore more readily. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "miners reshape the terrain as they heat rock with fire and then douse it with water to crack it" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 28:6

Its stones {are} the place of sapphire, and dusts of gold {are} to it

The pronouns **Its** and **it** refer to the earth. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “The stones of the earth contain sapphire, and there is gold in some of the dusts of the earth” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

sapphire

A **sapphire** is a rare and valuable blue gemstone. If your readers would not be familiar with what a sapphire is, in your translation you could use the name of a similar gemstone that they would recognize, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “valuable gemstones” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 28:7

No bird of prey knows the path

Job is referring implicitly to the **path** that miners take into the depths of the earth in search of gemstones and precious metals. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Miners take a route into the depths of the earth that not even a sharp-eyed bird of prey can detect" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the eye of the falcon has not seen it

Job is using one part of a **falcon**, its **eye**, to mean all of it in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "nor has the falcon has seen it" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and the eye of the falcon has not seen it

Job is not referring to a specific **falcon**. He means falcons in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "nor have falcons have seen it" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the falcon

A **falcon** is a bird that eats animals and other birds. If your readers would not be familiar with what a falcon is, in your translation you could use the name of a similar bird that they would recognize, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "a hawk" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 28:8

The sons of pride have not walked it

The expression **son of** describes a person or animal that possesses a certain quality. The word **pride** indicates that the animals Job is describing are confident in their strength and fierceness and are not afraid of other animals. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent idiom from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Even wild beasts that have no fear of going anywhere have not walked it” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

have not walked it

The pronoun **it** refers to the “path” that Job described in the previous verse, that is, the route that miners take into the earth. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “have not walked on that path” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and the lion has not passed over it

Job is not referring to a specific **lion**. He means lions in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “and lions have not passed over it” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 28:9

He stretches out his hand against flinty rock

The pronouns **He** and **his** refer to a miner. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be more natural in your language to use plural forms. Alternate translation: “Miners stretch out their hands against flinty rock” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

He stretches out his hand against flinty rock; he overturns

The expression “stretch out one’s hand against” means to attack something. Job is saying that miners will attack, that is, break up even the hardest kinds of rock in search of valuable materials. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Miners break up even the hardest kinds of rock in search of valuable materials; they overturn” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

he overturns mountains from their roots

Job is speaking of the ground below mountains as if it were the **roots** of those mountains. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation, using a plural form: “they overturn mountains, digging deep below them” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he overturns mountains from their roots

Job is speaking as if miners literally turn entire **mountains** upside down. He may be using the term **mountains** to represent great quantities of material. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly, and once again it may be more natural in your language to use a plural form. Alternate translation: “miners dislodge great quantities of material from the depths of the earth” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 28:10

He cuts out channels among the rocks, and his eye sees every valuable thing

The pronouns **He** and **his** refer to a miner. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be more natural in your language to use plural forms. Alternate translation: "Miners cut out channels among the rocks, and their eyes see every valuable thing" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

his eye sees

Job is using one part of a miner, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he sees" or "they see" (See: **Synecdoche (p. 1294)**)

and & every valuable thing

Job says **every** here as a generalization for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "and ... the many valuable things that the rocks contain" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 28:11

He binds the torrents from flowing, and he brings a hidden thing {to} light

The pronouns **He** and **he** refer to a miner. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be more natural in your language to use plural forms. Alternate translation: “Miners bind the torrents from flowing, and they bring hidden things to light” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

He binds the torrents from flowing, and he brings a hidden thing {to} light

Job is speaking as if a miner literally **binds** streams of water to keep them from **flowing**. He means that miners temporarily dam up streams or divert their flow to expose the materials that their waters usually hide. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Miners dam up or divert streams in order to expose what their waters usually hide” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to} light

Job is using the term **light** by association to describe something that is in view, since people need light in order to see things. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “into view” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 28:12

But where is wisdom found? And where is that, the place of understanding

Job is speaking as if **wisdom**, which he also calls **understanding**, could literally be **found** in a **place**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "But how can wisdom be obtained? How can a person get understanding?" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

But where is wisdom found? And where is that, the place of understanding

Job is not using the question form simply for emphasis. He wants his listeners to consider these questions in light of what he has just said. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements. Alternate translation: "But now I want you to consider where wisdom is found. I want you to consider where the place of understanding is" or "But now I want you to consider how wisdom can be obtained. I want you to consider how a person can get understanding" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

But where is wisdom found? And where is that, the place of understanding

Job is drawing an implicit comparison between the difficulty of finding gemstones and precious metals and the even greater difficulty of finding **wisdom** and **understanding**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "But wisdom is even harder to find than gemstones and precious metals. It is harder to know where the place of understanding is than it is to find those things. So I want you to consider how one can obtain wisdom." (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

But where is wisdom found? And where is that, the place of understanding

These two phrases mean similar things. Job is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "But wisdom is even harder to find than gemstones and precious metals. So I want you to consider how one can obtain wisdom." (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

But where is wisdom found

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "But where does one find wisdom" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 28:13

Man does not know

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "People do not know" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

its disposition

The word translated **disposition** could mean implicitly: (1) where God has put wisdom. Alternate translation: "its location" (2) the value of wisdom. Alternate translation: "its price" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

its disposition

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the pronoun **it** refers to wisdom here and through the rest of the chapter. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers at various points in your translation. Alternate translation: "the disposition of wisdom" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and it is not found

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "nor can anyone find it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

in the land of the living

Job is using the adjective **living** as a noun to mean a certain group of people, those who are alive on earth. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "among the people who live on earth" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 28:14

The deep says, 'It {is} not in me,' and the sea says, 'It is not with me

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "The deep says that wisdom is not in it, and the sea says that it is not with it" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

The deep says, 'It {is} not in me,' and the sea says, 'It is not with me

Job is speaking of the **deep** (that is, the depths of the ocean) and of the **sea** (probably meaning its broad expanse) as if they were living things that could speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If the deep could speak, it would say, 'Wisdom {is} not in me,' and if the sea could speak, it would say, 'It is not with me.'" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

The deep says, 'It {is} not in me,' and the sea says, 'It is not with me

These two phrases mean similar things. Job is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could combine them. Alternate translation: "The deep, wide ocean says, 'It is not in me'" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

Job 28:15

Gold is not given for it, nor is silver weighed {for} its price

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "One cannot give gold in exchange for wisdom, nor can one weigh out silver to pay for it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 28:16

It is not valued with the gold of Ophir

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "One cannot measure the value of wisdom with the gold of Ophir" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

with precious onyx or sapphire

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "nor is it valued with precious onyx or sapphire" or "nor can one measure its value with precious onyx or sapphire" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

with precious onyx or sapphire

An **onyx** is a valuable gemstone that comes in many colors but is best known in its black color. If your readers would not be familiar with what an onyx is, in your translation you could use the name of a similar gemstone that they would recognize, or you could use a general expression. See how you translated the term "sapphire" in [28:6](#). Alternate translation: "with valuable black or blue gemstones" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 28:17

nor crystal

The term **crystal** could be describing: (1) a beautiful natural form that a clear or colored mineral might take, allowing light to shine through it. Your readers might be familiar with a mineral that forms crystals, and if so, you could use its name here in your translation. Alternate translation: "nor quartz" (2) clear, sparkling glass. Alternate translation: "nor sparkling glass" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 28:18

Coral and jasper are not mentioned

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "One does not mention coral or jasper" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1136)**)

Coral and jasper are not mentioned

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "One does not even mention coral or jasper when discussing things that might be worth as much as wisdom" (See: **Ellipsis (p. 1174)**)

Coral

Coral is a beautiful, hard substance that grows on ocean reefs. If your readers would not be familiar with what coral is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "Beautiful seashells" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

and jasper

The word **jasper** describes a precious stone, often reddish-brown, that often has streaks and markings of other colors. If your readers would not be familiar with what jasper is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable precious stone that they would recognize. You could also use a general expression. Alternate translation: "and precious stones" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

is} more than rubies

The word **rubies** describes brilliant gemstones that are often deep red. If your readers would not be familiar with what rubies are, in your translation you could use the name of a gemstone that they would recognize. You could also use a general expression. Alternate translation: "is more than that of red gemstones" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 28:19

The topaz of Cush

The word **topaz** describes a valuable gemstone that is often blue or yellow. If your readers would not be familiar with what topaz is, in your translation you could use the name of a gemstone that they would recognize, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “The gemstones that come from Cush” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Cush

The word **Cush** is the name of a place. It is the ancient name for the upper Nile region. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

it is not valued in pure gold

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “one cannot value wisdom in terms of pure gold” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 28:20

From whence, then, does wisdom come? And where {is} that, the place of understanding

See how you translated the similar questions in [28:12](#). Alternate translation: “So then people do need to consider very carefully how to obtain wisdom. They should think deeply about how to get understanding.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 28:21

It is hidden from the eyes of each living {thing}; even from the birds of the heavens it is concealed

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "The eyes of no living thing can see it; not even the birds of the heavens can spot it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

from the eyes of

Job is using one part of a **living thing**, its **eyes**, to mean all of it in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from the sight of" (See: **Synecdoche (p. 1294)**)

Job 28:22

Abaddon and death say, We have heard a rumor of it with our ears

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "Abaddon and death say that they have heard a rumor of it with their ears" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Abaddon and death say, We have heard a rumor of it with our ears

Job is speaking as if **Abaddon** and **death** were living things that could speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If Abaddon and death could speak, they would say, 'We have heard a rumor of it with our ears'" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Abaddon and death say, We have heard a rumor of it with our ears

The terms **Abaddon** and **death** mean similar things. As a note to [26:6](#) explains, Abaddon is another name for Sheol, the abode of the dead. In this context, the term **death** likely refers by association to the abode of the dead. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "The underworld says, 'I have heard a rumor of it with my ears'" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

We have heard a rumor of it with our ears

The speakers mean that while they have **heard** of wisdom with their **ears**, they have not seen it with their eyes or encountered it in person. So the mention of the **ears**, which might otherwise seem like extra information because the notion is already implicit in the term **heard**, actually serves to limit the statement. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "We have only heard a rumor of it" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

Job 28:23

God understands its way, and he knows its place

Job is continuing to speak as if wisdom could literally be found in a **place** and that there was a **way** to get there. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God understands how humans can obtain wisdom, yes, he knows how they can become wise” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

its way

Job is using this possessive form to describe not the **way** that wisdom takes but the **way** that leads to wisdom. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “the way that leads to wisdom” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 28:24

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said in the preceding verse that God knew where to find wisdom. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “God knows where to find wisdom because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

he looks to the ends of the earth; he sees beneath all of the heavens

Job is using the two main components of creation, **earth** and the **heavens**, to mean the entire creation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or plain language. Alternate translation: “he can see everything in the entire creation” (See: **Merism (p.1236)**)

he looks

For emphasis, Job is stating the pronoun **he**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **looks**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “he is the one who looks” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 28:25

When he made the weight for the wind

Job is using the term **weight** to mean “force.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “When he determined the force of the wind” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and apportioned the waters by measure

Job is referring implicitly to the rain **waters** that clouds contain. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and apportioned rain waters to the clouds by measure” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and apportioned the waters by measure

Job is speaking as if God literally used a **measure** in order to put the right amount of rain **waters** in the clouds. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and carefully apportioned rain waters to the clouds” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 28:26

for the flash of the thunders

Job is using the expression **the flash of the thunders** by association to mean the bolts of lightning that accompany thunder. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "for the lightning bolts" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 28:27

then he saw it and recounted it

The pronoun **he** refers to God, and the pronoun **it** refers to wisdom. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “then God recognized what wisdom would be, and he described it” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 28:28

And he said to man, Behold, the fear of the Lord—that {is} wisdom, and to turn from evil {is} understanding

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “And he told man that the fear of the Lord was indeed wisdom and that to turn from evil was understanding” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

to man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “to humankind” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

the fear of the Lord

The Lord is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “to fear me” or “to reverence me” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

and to turn from evil {is} understanding

The Lord is speaking as if people should physically **turn** away from evil. He means that if people want to have **understanding**, they should not live in an evil way but instead live in a good way. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and people will obtain understanding if they reject what is evil” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 29

Job 29 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Job's final response to his three friends. In this chapter, Job recalls the honor he enjoyed and the influence he exercised within his community before he suffered so many misfortunes.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Litany

In verses 2–6, Job makes a series of statements about what his life was like before his present troubles. He expresses a wish in verse 2 that his life could be like this again, and in verses 3–6 he offers a series of descriptions that each begin with “when” or “as that.” A series of statements such as this is known as a litany. If your readers would recognize what Job is doing, you can translate and format this litany the way the ULT does. If the litany form would not be familiar to your readers, you could help them appreciate it by putting each sentence of the litany on a separate line. See what you did with the similar litany in chapter 12. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could make each verse in the litany a separate sentence. For example, you could begin verse 3, “At that time.”

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Reference of “they” in verses 21–25

Job uses “they” in verses 21–25 as an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could specify a general referent such as “people” at regular intervals for clarity. Notes suggest how you might do that at various places.

Job 29:1

And Job continued to take up his discourse, and he said

See how you translated the same expression in [27:1](#). Alternate translation: "As Job continued his speech, he said" or "Job continued speaking and he said" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 29:2

Who will give me {to be} as {in} the months of

See how you translated the expression **Who will give** in 11:5-6. Alternate translation: “Oh that I were as I was in the months of” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

to be} as {in} the months of the past, as {in} the days {when} God was keeping me

Job is using the terms **months** and **days** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to be as I was in time past, as in the time when God kept me” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 29:3

when his lamp shone over my head, when} I walked {in} darkness by his light

Job is speaking as if God literally **shone** a **lamp** above and around him so that he could see where to walk even in the **darkness**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "when God showed me clearly what to do so that I could make the right choices even in confusing situations" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

over my head

Job is using one part of himself, his **head**, to mean all of him when speaking as if God **shone** a **lamp** above and around him. He is probably speaking of himself in terms of his head because that would have been the part of him closest to the lamp. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "above and around me" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 29:4

in the days of my prime

Job is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “at the time when I was in my prime” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

when the friendship of God {was} upon my tent

Job is speaking as if God’s **friendship** were literally an object that had rested **upon** his tent. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “when God in friendship blessed my tent” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

my tent

As the next two verses indicate, Job is referring to his family by association with the **tent** in which they lived and to his possessions by association with the same **tent**, in which he kept them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or express the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my family and my possessions” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 29:5

my children around me

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “when my children were still around me” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 29:6

when my steps were bathed in butter and the rock poured out streams of oil for me

Job is speaking as if his herds used to produce so much milk that there was **butter** everywhere he went, so that when he walked anywhere, it was as if his feet were literally being **bathed** in butter. He is also speaking as if his olive trees used to produce so many olives that it was as if there were literally **streams** of oil coming to him out of the rocks. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “when my herds produced milk in great abundance and my olive trees yielded great quantities of oil for me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

when my steps were bathed in butter

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “when butter bathed my steps” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and the rock

Job is not referring to a specific **rock**. He means rocks in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “and the rocks” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 29:7

when} I took my seat in the square

Taking a **seat** in the public **square** by the city **gate** was a symbolic action by which Job showed that he was a recognized community leader, a member of the council that settled legal matters for the city residents. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “when I took my seat in the square as a recognized community leader” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 29:8

and hid themselves

This expression does not mean that these **young men** looked for hiding places where no one would find them. It means that they moved back from the place where the leaders sat, blending into the crowd. The idea is that before Job came, they thought they might have something to contribute to the deliberations after their elders had spoken, as Elihu does in this book starting in chapter 32. But once Job arrived, they knew that his wise counsel would settle matters and they would have no need or opportunity to contribute. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and withdrew” or “and stepped aside out of respect” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and old men rose, they stood

Rising and standing when Job arrived was a symbolic action that showed respect for his wisdom and place in the community. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “and old men rose and stood out of respect for me” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

rose, they stood

The terms **rose** and **stood** mean similar things. Job is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “stood to their feet” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 29:9

refrained from words

Job is using the term **words** to mean what these **princes** had been saying by using words before he arrived. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “stopped speaking” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and they put a hand on their mouth

Since Job is speaking of many people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural forms of **hand** and **mouth**. Alternate translation: “and they put their hands on their mouths” or “and they covered their mouths with their hands” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

and they put a hand on their mouth

Covering the **mouth** with the **hand** prevents a person from speaking. While the **princes** could simply have stopped talking without doing that, they did it as a symbolic action to show respect for Job, indicating that there was nothing they could say that would be more valuable than what he would say. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “and they covered their mouths with their hands to indicate respectfully that there was nothing they could say that would be more valuable than what I would say” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 29:10

The voice of & and their tongue & to their palate

Since Job is speaking of many people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural forms of **voice**, **tongue**, and **palate**. Alternate translation: “The voices of ... and their tongues ... to their palates” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

The voice of the nobles—they were hushed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “The nobles hushed their voices” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and their tongue stuck to their palate

Job is speaking as if the **tongue** of each noble literally **stuck** to his **palate**, that is, to the roof of his mouth. He means that they did not say anything, as no one could say anything if his tongue truly had become stuck in this way. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and they did not say anything” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 29:11

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said in the preceding verses that these various groups of people kept silent when he arrived at the city gate. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “They all kept silent because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p. 1163)**)

the ear heard, and they blessed me

Job is using one part of each of these community members, his **ear**, to mean all of him in the act of hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they heard me and they blessed me” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the ear heard

If you decide to retain the term **ear** in your translation to mean hearing, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of that word, since Job is speaking about many people. Alternate translation: “their ears heard” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

and they blessed me

Job means implicitly that the people **blessed** him for giving such wise, godly counsel. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and they blessed me for giving such wise, godly counsel” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the eye saw, and they attested me

Job is using the term **eye** by association to mean sight. Sight, in turn, represents attention, perspective, and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and when they perceived that the advice I had given was wise, they attested that I had said the right thing” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and the eye saw

If you decide to retain the term **ear** in your translation to mean hearing, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of that word, since Job is speaking about many people. Alternate translation: “and their eyes saw” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

Job 29:12

the afflicted & and the fatherless & to him

Job is using the adjectives **afflicted** and **fatherless** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “poor people who were ... and fatherless people ... to them” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the afflicted

The term **afflicted** may seem like a passive verbal form, but it is actually an adjective. It indicates people who are suffering from affliction, not people whom others have afflicted. However, if your language does not use passive verbal forms, it may be more natural to express this idea with a term other than “afflicted.” Alternate translation: “people who were suffering from affliction” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 29:13

The blessing of the one perishing came upon me, and I gladdened the heart of the widow

Job is not referring to a specific person who was **perishing** or to a specific **widow**. He means those types of people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "The blessing of people who were perishing came upon me, and I gladdened the hearts of widows" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

The blessing of the one perishing came upon me

Job is speaking of the **blessing** that he received from someone who was **perishing** as if it were a living thing that could come **upon** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "People who were perishing blessed me" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and I gladdened the heart of the widow

Job is using one part of a **widow**, her **heart**, to mean all of her in the act of feeling joy. Here the **heart** represents the feelings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I made widows rejoice" or "and I gave widows reason to rejoice" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 29:14

I clothed myself {with} righteousness, and it clothed me

Job is repeating the verb **clothed** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: "I wrapped righteousness all around me" (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

I clothed myself {with} righteousness, and it clothed me

Job is speaking as if he literally **clothed** himself with **righteousness** during the time that he is describing. In this context, the image of clothing represents the character of a person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I was very careful to practice righteousness" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

I clothed myself {with} righteousness, and it clothed me

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **righteousness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "I was very careful to be righteous in my dealings with people" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

my justice {was} like a robe and a turban

In this comparison, clothing once again represents the character of a person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I was also careful to make sure that people received justice" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

my justice {was}

Job is using this possessive form to describe not **justice** that he received but just decisions that he helped the city leaders make. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "the just decisions that I helped the city leaders make were" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 29:15

I was eyes to the blind, and I {was} feet to the lame

Job is speaking as if he had literally been **eyes** and **feet** that other people needed. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I saw and read things to help people who could not see, and I went places on behalf of people who could not go to those places themselves" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to the blind, & to the lame

Job is using the adjectives **blind** and **lame** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "for blind people ... for lame people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 29:16

a father to the needy

Job is speaking as if he had literally been a **father** to **needy** people. He means that he fulfilled the role of a father by being a protector and advocate. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “a protector of the needy” or “an advocate for the needy” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to the needy

Job is using the adjective **needy** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “to needy people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and the case {that} I did not know, I examined it

Job is referring implicitly to a **case** whose details he did not **know** before someone brought it to the city gate for adjudication. Job did not know these details because he was not personally acquainted with the person bringing the case. So he was not motivated by friendship or family loyalty, but simply by the interests of justice. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and I made sure that each person got justice even if he was not a friend or relative of mine” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 29:17

And I broke the jaws of the unrighteous, and I made the prey drop from his teeth

Job is speaking as if an **unrighteous** person had been a wild animal that was holding a vulnerable person like captured **prey** in its **teeth** and as if he had broken the **jaws** of this animal so that they could no longer hold the vulnerable person, who would **drop** out to safety. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And when an unrighteous person had coerced a vulnerable person into an oppressive arrangement, I made the unrighteous person release the vulnerable person from that arrangement" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the unrighteous, and & from his teeth

Job is using the adjective **unrighteous** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "unrighteous people, and ... from their teeth" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 29:18

And I said, 'I will expire in my nest, and I will multiply days like sand

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "And I said that I would expire in my nest and that I would multiply days like sand" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

And I said, 'I will expire in my nest, and I will multiply days like sand

Since Job would live a long life before expiring, it might be more natural to put the second phrase before the first one. Alternate translation: "I will multiply days like sand, and then I will expire in my nest" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

I will expire

See how you translated the term **expire** in [3:11](#). Alternate translation: "I will pass away" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

in my nest

Job is speaking of his home as if it were literally a **nest** such as a bird would live in. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "in my own home" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and I will multiply days like sand

The point of this comparison is that just as **sand** consists of a very large number of grains, so Job expected to live for a very large number of days. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "after I have lived for very many days" or "after I have lived for a long time" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 29:19

My root is spread out to the waters, and the dew lodges on my branch

If you decided in the previous verse to translate this quotation in a such way that there would not be a quotation within a quotation, you can continue doing that here. Alternate translation: "I said that my root was spread out to the waters and that the dew lodged on my branch" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

My root is spread out to the waters, and the dew lodges on my branch

Job spoke of himself in those days as if he were literally a tree that was healthy and flourishing because it was getting all the moisture that it required. Since Job is describing what he used to say, it may be good to retain this image in your translation, but if it would be more natural in your language, you could express it as a comparison. Alternate translation: "I said that I was like a tree that was healthy and flourishing because it was getting all the moisture that it required through roots that reached down to ground water and through dew that formed at night on its branches" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

My root is spread out & on my branch

Since Job was speaking of many roots and branches, it may be more natural in your language to use plural forms here. Alternate translation: "My roots are spread out ... on my branches" (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

and the dew lodges on my branch

Job was speaking as if the **dew** had been a traveler that had found lodging for the night on a **branch** of the tree that he was using to represent himself. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and dew forms at night on my branches" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 29:20

My glory {is} fresh in me, and my bow sprouts in my hand

If you have been translating this quotation in such a way that there is not a quotation within a quotation, you can continue doing that here. Alternate translation: "I said that my glory was fresh in me and that my bow sprouted in my hand" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

My glory {is} fresh in me

Job means implicitly that the **glory** or honor that he enjoys is always **fresh** because people keep honoring him in new ways. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "People keep honoring me in new ways" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and my bow sprouts in my hand

Job is speaking as if he had a **bow**, a weapon that he used with arrows, and that it grew freshly in his **hand** the way that a branch sprouts from a tree trunk. (Job uses the same verb for "sprout" in [14:7-9](#) to describe a tree reviving and sending out shoots when moisture returns to the ground.) He means that the bow, which represents his strength, is lively and vigorous. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I stay vigorously strong" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 29:21

They listened to me and they waited

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “Because people were waiting to hear what I would say, they listened to me” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

They listened

They is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. (As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, Job continues to use the pronoun “they” with this same indefinite sense through to the end of the chapter.) If it would be helpful in your language, here and in the following verses you could translate the term with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: “People listened” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 29:22

After my word

Job is using the term **word** to mean what he said by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "After I had spoken" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

for my speech dripped on them

Job is speaking as if his speech literally **dripped**, that is, fell in drops, on his listeners. He means that it was refreshing and invigorating to them, like gentle rain. This enabled them to recognize that he was giving sound advice. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "for what I said was refreshing to them" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 29:23

And they waited for me as {for} rain

The point of this comparison is that just as people are eager for rain to fall and water their crops, so Job's listeners were eager to hear him speak. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly.

Alternate translation: "And people as waited eagerly to hear me speak as they wait for rain to fall on their crops" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and they opened their mouth {as} for the latter rain

Job is using a complex image here. First, he is speaking as if the people listening to him were literally the ground.

Second, he is speaking of the ground soaking up rainfall as if it were opening its **mouth** to drink water. Job does not mean that the people opened their mouths to speak; he is actually describing them listening. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here.

Alternate translation: "Yes, they were eager to listen to everything I said, just as the dry ground soaks up the latter rain when it falls" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

as} for the latter rain

In the region where the book of Job was composed, people would plant crops in the fall. Rain at that time would help the crops start growing. But farmers depended on later rains, which would fall in the spring after an interval during which little rain fell, to enable the crops grow to maturity. Express this in a way that would be meaningful to your readers. Alternate translation: "as for the rain that falls again after the dry season" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 29:24

I smiled on them {when} they did not believe

The pronouns **them** and **they** refer to people who were in desperate situations and did not **believe** that they would get justice or receive help. Alternate translation: "I smiled on people who felt desperate and hopeless" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

I smiled on them {when} they did not believe

Job is describing one thing he did to encourage despondent people, he **smiled on them**, to mean all that he did to encourage them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I encouraged people who felt desperate and hopeless" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and they did not cause the light of my face to fall

Job is speaking as if there had been light shining from his face. He is describing a cheerful facial expression that indicated hope and a favorable disposition. Job is also using a further characteristic image for facial expressions. In this culture, people would say that someone "lifted up" his face if he made a cheerful expression but that his face "fell" if he made a gloomy expression. Job means that he did not let the situations of the people he wanted to help discourage him. Job is combining the two images and saying that they did not cause the light of his face to fall. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a different image that has this meaning or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I did not let their situations discourage me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 29:25

I chose their way and I sat as a chief

Since Job **chose** the **way** for the people of his community because he was their **chief**, it might be more natural to reverse the order of these phrases. Alternate translation: "I sat as a chief and I chose their way" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

I chose their way

Job is speaking of what he determined his community should do as if that were a **way** or path for the people to walk along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I guided them about the right things to do" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and I sat as a chief

Job is describing how he held the position of a **chief** by association with the way he **sat** in a place reserved for such a leader. (He refers similarly to "my seat" in verse 7.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I was their chief" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and I dwelt like a king in an army

In this culture, kings would accompany their armies into the field as their commanders. The point of this comparison is probably that just as the authority of a **king** would be unquestioned within his **army**, so people did not question Job's directions as their leader. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "and everyone respected my authority" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

as when one comforts mourners

Job makes this further comparison to specify that he led the community gently and in its own best interests. He did not exercise his authority in an arbitrary, despotic way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "but I was gentle and encouraging as a leader" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 30

Job 30 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Job's final response to his three friends. - Verses 1-14: Job describes the disrespect he now experiences because he has suffered so many misfortunes - Verses 15-19: Job describes his sufferings - Verses 20-23: Job addresses God directly to complain that God has not helped him - Verses 24-31: Job describes how he is suffering even though he helped others when they suffered

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Reference of "they" in verses 2-10

In verses 2-10, Job uses the pronouns "they," "them," and "their" to mean the young men who now treat him disrespectfully. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could specify this reference at regular intervals for clarity. Various notes suggest ways to do that. (In verse 5, as a note will clarify, one instance of "they" refers to other people.)

Job 30:1

the fewer in days than me

Job is using the adjective phrase **fewer in days** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. (He is contrasting his present situation, in which younger people now disrespect him, with the way that “young men” formerly withdrew respectfully from his presence and “old men” stood up out of respect for him, as he described in 29:8.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “those who are much younger than I am” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

whose fathers I disdained to put with the dogs of my flock

The implications of this statement is that the **fathers** of the young men who now **laugh at** Job were shiftless and incompetent. This could mean: (1) that Job would not employ these men to do even such menial tasks as shepherd **dogs** do. Alternate translation: “whose fathers I could not even employ to do menial tasks” (2) that Job would not specifically employ these men as shepherds for his flocks, working with his sheepdogs. Alternate translation: “whose fathers I would not even employ as shepherds” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 1143)**)

Job 30:2

the strength of their hands, for what {is it} to me

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I have no use for the strength of their hands!" or "the strength of their hands is useless to me!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the strength of their hands, for what {is it} to me

Job is using one part of these young men, their **hands**, to mean all of them in the act of using **strength** to work. As the rest of the verse indicates, these young men have only feeble strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have no use for their feeble strength!" or "their feeble strength is useless to me!" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

In them old age has perished

Job is speaking of **old age** as if it were a living thing that has **perished** in these young men. Eliphaz uses the same term for "old age" in 5:26. There it means the maturity and accomplishment that come from a long life well lived. Here the term seems to indicate the vigor that someone would have in his youth that would enable him to live such a long life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They have lost the vigor that would have enabled them to live a long life" or "They have lost their youthful vigor" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

In them

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the pronoun **them** refers to the young men who now treat Job disrespectfully, as do the pronouns "they," "them," and "their" in verses 4-10. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "In these young men" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 30:3

ones gnawing the dry land

Job is speaking of the **dry land** by association to mean the roots that grow in the land, as the next verse makes clear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. It may also be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "These young men gnaw on the roots that they find in the ground" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the dry land yesterday {in} waste and desolation

The term **yesterday** could mean: (1) time gone by. Alternate translation: "the land that has long been dry, a waste and desolation" (2) the darkness of the night that precedes day. Alternate translation: "the dry land in the gloom of waste and desolation" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

in} waste and desolation

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **desolation** tells what kind of **waste** this is. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use "and." Alternate translation: "in a desolate wasteland" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 30:4

mallow

The word **mallow** describes a kind of flowering plant whose leaves are edible. Your language may have a name of its own for this plant that you could use in your translation. If your readers would not be familiar with the plant, you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “desert plants” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

and the root of broom trees {is} their bread

Since Job is speaking of many roots, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **root**. Alternate translation: “and the roots of broom trees are their bread” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

broom trees

A **broom** tree is a kind of shrub that grows in desert areas. If your readers would not be familiar with this shrub, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable one that they would recognize, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “shrubs” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

is} their bread

Job is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. While the roots of the **broom** tree are edible, they have a bitter taste, and only a desperate person would eat them. So there is a sense here that the people whom Job is describing eat these roots out of desperation. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “is their food” or “is all they have to eat” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 30:5

They are driven out

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "People drive these young men out" (See: **Active or Passive (p. 1136)**)

from the midst

Job means implicitly that these young men are **driven out** from the **midst** of human community. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "from society" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

they shout after them

Here the pronoun **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. It means the people of society in general. (The pronoun **them** refers to the young men whom Job has been describing.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "people shout after these young men" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

as {after} a thief

Job is speaking of people chasing others away, so this seems to be a reference to people shouting at a would-be **thief** in order to call attention to him and get him to flee before he steals something. Job is probably not referring to people shouting to get others to pursue and apprehend a thief who has already stolen something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "as they would shout to chase away a would-be thief" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 30:6

to dwell

This phrase indicates the result of what Job describes in the previous verse, “They are driven out from the midst.” It may be helpful to indicate that explicitly, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “As a result, they have to live” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

on the slope of wadis

Since Job is speaking of the slopes of many **wadis**, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **slope**. Alternate translation: “on the slopes of wadis” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

in} holes of the dust

Job is using one part of the ground, the **dust** on its surface, to mean the ground itself. **Iron** is actually **taken** from deep in the ground. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in holes in the ground” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 30:7

they bray

Job is speaking as if these young men literally **bray** as if they were donkeys. He likely means that they moan with hunger, as wild animals cry out when they need food. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "these young men moan with hunger" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they are gathered together

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "they gather together" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 30:8

Sons of a fool, indeed, sons of {one} without a name

Job is not referring to a specific **fool** or person **without a name**. He means such people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express these meanings by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "Sons of fools, indeed, sons of people without names" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Sons of a fool, indeed, sons of {one} without a name

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be helpful to your readers. However, you might also leave the words out in order to show the force of this exclamation, with which Job concludes his description of these young men. Alternate translation: "These young men are sons of fools! Indeed, they are sons of people without names" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Sons of a fool, indeed, sons of {one} without a name

In this context, the expression **sons of** describes people who share the qualities of something. Job is using this expression to describe the behavior and character of these young men. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. The word **fool** here does not indicate someone who lacks intelligence or education; it means someone who chooses to disobey God, thinking there will be no consequences. The word **name** here means a good reputation. Alternate translation: "People who foolishly think they can disobey God! No wonder they are people of no reputation" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

They are scourged from the land

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "People scourge them from the land" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

They are scourged from the land

Job is using one means by which authorities might drive such young men out of the community, by scourging (whipping) them, to mean all of the ways in which they would drive them out. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They are driven from the land" or "People drive them from the land" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 30:9

their song

Job means implicitly that these young men are singing about him disrespectfully. Your language may have a term that you could use to indicate that in your translation. Alternate translation: “the subject of their taunt-song” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and I am a word for them

The meaning of the term **word** here is the same as the meaning of the term “saying” in [17:6](#). Job means that these young men are citing him by name as an outstanding example of someone who seemed to be prospering because he was righteous but who came to ruin because he was actually wicked. Your language may have an expression for this practice of citing people by name as examples, and you may be able to use that expression in your translation. See how you translated the term “saying” in [17:6](#). (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 30:10

they stay away from me

Staying **away from** Job, that is, not approaching him or speaking with him, was a symbolic action that conveyed disrespect and disapproval. Even though physically it was the same thing that young men formerly did to show respect for Job, discreetly withdrawing from his presence, now it had the opposite meaning. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: “they stay away from me to show their disapproval” or “they shun me” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

but from my face they do not withhold spit

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **withhold**. Alternate translation: “but they spit in my face” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

but from my face they do not withhold spit

Spitting in Job’s face was a symbolic action that showed contempt for him as someone who was presumably a sinner. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. See how you translated the similar expression in [17:6](#). Alternate translation: “but they spit contemptuously in my face” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

but from my face they do not withhold spit

Job does not mean that these young men **spit** at him from a distance, even though he says that they **stay away** from him. He means that when they must unavoidably pass near him, they use the occasion to spit in his face. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “but they spit contemptuously in my face when they pass by” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 30:11

he has loosed & they cast away

The pronoun **he** refers to God, and the pronoun **they** refers to the young men whom Job has been describing. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "God has loosed ... these young men cast away" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he has loosed my cord

Job is speaking as if God has in some way literally **loosed** a **cord** that belongs to him or pertains to him. This could mean: (1) that God has loosened the bowstring on a bow that belongs to Job, so that the bow is no longer useful. The bow would represent Job's strength. Alternate translation: "he has taken away my strength" (2) that God has released a cord that was holding up the tent in which Job lived, so that the tent has collapsed. The tent would represent Job's life. Alternate translation: "he has ruined my life" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

so they cast away restraint

Job is speaking as if **restraint** were literally an object that people could **cast away**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "so they act without restraint" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

from my face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "in my presence" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 30:12

On {my} right the brood arise

Job is using the adjective **right** as a noun to mean his right side. Your language may also use adjectives this way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "On my right side the brood arise" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

On {my} right the brood arise

The right side was usually the most dangerous side on which to approach an enemy soldier, since a majority of soldiers were right-handed and would use their right hands and arms to wield their swords. The implication is that these young men have no fear of what Job might do to them. Alternate translation: "Without fear the brood arise" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the brood

Job is speaking of these young men as if they were the **brood** of a bird or animal. The image is of a cluster of immature offspring moving agitatedly about. Your language may have a comparable expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "the rabble" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they thrust aside my foot

Job is using one part of himself, his **foot**, to mean all of him in the act of walking. He probably means that as he is walking on the road, when these young men are approaching from the opposite direction, they do not stand respectfully aside so that he can pass. Instead, they shove him out of the way so that they can pass. When young men traveling in the same direction overtake him, they similarly push him aside so that they can go by. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "on the roads, they push me out of the way" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and they pile up roads of destruction against me

Job is speaking of siege mounds by association with the way that they provide **roads** or ways for attacking armies to get into cities and cause their **destruction**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they build siege mounds against me" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and they pile up roads of destruction against me

Job is speaking as if he were a city and these young men were literally building siege mounds in order to conquer that city. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and they look for ways to attack me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 30:13

They destroy my path

Job is speaking as if there were literally a **path** that he could take to escape from the attacks of these young men and that they are destroying it so that Job cannot use it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They prevent me from escaping" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

they advance my calamity

Job is speaking as if **calamity** were literally an object that these young men could move forward, farther along its route to a destination. He means that in addition to all the bad things that have happened to him, they do further bad things to him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they add to my sufferings" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

there is} no help for them

This could mean: (1) that they do despicable things to Job that no decent person would join them in doing. Alternate translation: "they do things to me that no decent person would do" (2) that they are contemptible people. This may be a popular expression indicating that. Alternate translation: "they are contemptible people" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 30:14

As {through} a wide breach they come; amid the ruin they roll on

Job is continuing the image of himself as a city and these young men as a besieging army. He is describing an attack in full force: The army has made a **wide breach** in the city wall and the soldiers are pouring through it. Job says within this image that they **roll on**, perhaps like waves of the sea, one wave after another. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "These young men attack me without restraint, time and time again" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 30:15

Terrors are turned against me

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. The word **Terrors** could indicate: (1) things that create fear or terror. Alternate translation: "Terrible things keep happening to me" (2) terrors or fears themselves. Alternate translation: "I have many fears" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

each} one pursues my dignity

Job is speaking of these **Terrors** as if they were living things that could **pursue** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "each one deprives me of dignity" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

like the wind

The point of this comparison is that just as a strong wind relentlessly drives away light objects, so the **Terrors** that Job is experiencing are relentlessly depriving him of dignity. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "relentlessly" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and my deliverance passes away like a cloud

The point of this comparison is that just as a **cloud** fades from the sky, so all hope of **deliverance** has faded for Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "and I no longer have any hope of deliverance" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and my deliverance passes away like a cloud

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **deliverance**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and I no longer have any hope that someone will deliver me" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 30:16

my life pours itself out within me

Job is speaking as if his **life** were a liquid that was being poured out of a container so that soon none of it would be left in the container. (Although the verb is reflexive, it has a passive sense; Job is not saying, within this image, that his life is doing this on its own initiative.) If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my life is ebbing away within me” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

days of affliction seize me

Job is speaking of these **days** as if they were living things that could **seize** him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I am continually experiencing days of affliction” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

days of affliction

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **affliction**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “days during which I am afflicted” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 30:17

Night pierces my bones

Job is speaking of **Night** as if it were a living thing that could pierce his **bones**. He is doing this to describe the pain that he feels more keenly at night. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "At night, pain pierces my bones" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Night pierces my bones

Job is using one part of himself, his **bones**, to mean all of him in the act of feeling pain. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "At night, pain pierces my body" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Night pierces my bones

Job is speaking as if pain were literally piercing his body or putting holes in it. He means that he gets a stabbing sensation of pain as if he were actually being stabbed. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "At night, I have stabbing sensations of pain" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

from upon me

It is not entirely clear what Job means by this expression. He uses the same expression in [30:30](#) to describe how his skin, darkened by disease, is peeling off. So this could be a reference to the pain from his sores radiating deep into his body. Alternate translation: "from the sores on my skin" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and the ones gnawing me do not rest

Job is speaking of the pains he is suffering as if they were living things that could be **gnawing** him and could **rest** (although they do not). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and the pain is like someone chewing on me, and it never stops" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 30:18

By great force

Job is referring implicitly to the **great force** of his skin disease, its power to do so much damage. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Because of my serious disease,” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

my clothing is changed

Job is probably speaking of his skin as if it were his **clothing**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my skin is changed” or “my skin is disfigured” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it binds me like the collar of my tunic

The pronoun **it** refers to Job’s skin disease. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “my skin disease binds me like the collar of my tunic” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

it binds me like the collar of my tunic

Job is speaking as if his disease were literally binding him, or wrapping him up tightly, the way a person in his culture would put on a **tunic** and then wrap its **collar** tightly around his neck. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my skin disease afflicts me continually” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 30:19

He has thrown me into the mud

The pronoun **He** refers to text. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "God has thrown me into the mud" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

He has thrown me into the mud

Job is speaking as if God had literally **thrown** him into **mud**. This could mean: (1) that Job is using the image of being **thrown** into **mud** to represent his loss of position and status. Alternate translation: "God has reduced me to meager circumstances" (2) that Job is referring to the way he has been demonstrating his distress by sitting in the midst of the ash pile outside the city, as [2:8](#) describes. Alternate translation: "God has caused me such distress that I have been sitting in this ash heap" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and I have become like dust and ashes

Job is speaking as if he had literally become like **dust** and **ashes**. This could be: (1) a physical description. Job may mean that the dust and ashes from the pile where he is sitting have stuck to his skin because of his oozing sores and so now he physically resembles dust and ashes himself. Job describes the appearance of his body in the previous verse, and this could be a continuation of that description. Alternate translation: "and I now appear to have become dust and ashes" (2) a comparison. Job may be saying that in some way his situation resembles some characteristic of **dust and ashes**, perhaps their lowliness of being on the ground. Alternate translation: "and I am greatly humiliated" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 30:20

I stand

Standing up was a symbolic action by which someone in this community would call attention to the fact that they needed help. Job may mean that he does this literally as an appeal to God for help, or he may be speaking as if he does it when actually he appeals for help in some other way, such as by praying, as he describes in the first part of the verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "I stand to get your attention and appeal for help" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

but you gaze at me

Job means implicitly that God does nothing but **gaze** at him without helping him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "but you only look at me and do not help me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 30:21

with the strength of your hand

Here, God's **hand** represents his power. Job is using this possessive form to describe how God's **strength** is characterized by power, that is, God's strength is very great. Alternate translation: "with your great strength" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 30:22

You lift me up on the wind; you make me ride on it, and you toss me about {in} a storm

Job is speaking as if God uses the wind to **lift** him off the ground and as if the wind carries him away as if he were riding on it the way a person would **ride** a horse. He is also speaking as if God uses a **storm** to **toss** him about. He means that God is causing him such great distress that he feels as if these things are happening to him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "You are causing me such great distress that it feels as if a storm wind is picking me up, carrying me away, and tossing me about" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 30:23

to} death and {to} the house of appointment to all the living

These two phrases mean similar things. Job is using repetition to emphasize the idea that the phrases express. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that by using a word other than “and” in your translation. Alternate translation: “to death, yes, to the house of appointment to all the living” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

to} death

As the rest of the verse shows, Job is using the term **death** by association to mean Sheol, the abode of the dead. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to Sheol” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and {to} the house of appointment to all the living

Job is speaking as if Sheol were a **house** in which dead people lived. He means that it is the place to which people go when they die. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and to the place of appointment to all the living” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and {to} the house of appointment to all the living

Job is using this possessive form to indicate that God has appointed Sheol as the place where living people are to go when they die. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “and to the place God has appointed for living people to go when they die” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

the living

Job is using the adjective **living** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “living people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 30:24

does not one in a heap stretch out a hand? If in his trouble he does {not} therefore cry out

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "one in a heap certainly stretches out a hand! He certainly cries out because he is in trouble!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

does not one in a heap stretch out a hand

Job is using a hypothetical situation as an example and applying it by implication to his own situation. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "if someone is in a heap of ruins, then he certainly stretches out a hand, and in the same way I am calling to you for help." (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1204)**)

does not one in a heap stretch out a hand

Reaching out with one's **hand** when in a desperate situation is a symbolic action that constitutes an appeal for help. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "does not one in a heap of ruins appeal for help" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

If in his trouble he does {not} therefore cry out

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a contrary answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "He cries out because he is in trouble, does he not" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 30:25

If I did not weep for the difficult of day

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a contrary answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I wept for the difficult of day, did I not?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If I did not weep for the difficult of day

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I certainly wept for the difficult of day!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

for the difficult of day

Job is using the adjective phrase **difficult of day** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. (In this phrase, the word **day** indicates a time, and the possessive form indicates that this time was characterized by difficulty.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "for people who were going through difficult times" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

My soul grieved for the needy

Job is suggesting implicitly that since he helped others who were in trouble, it is only fair for him to ask God for help now that he is in trouble himself. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "My soul grieved for the needy, so it is only fair for me to ask you for help now" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

My soul grieved

Job is using one part of himself, his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of grieving sympathetically. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I grieved sympathetically" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 30:26

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he has been saying that he can legitimately appeal for help. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I can legitimately appeal for help because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

for} good, but bad came

Job is using the adjectives **good** and **bad** as nouns to mean certain kinds of things. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "for good things ... but bad things happened to me instead" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

for light, but darkness comes

Job is speaking as if helpful things were literally **light** and harmful things were literally **darkness**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "for helpful things, but harmful things happen instead" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 30:27

My innards are boiled and they do not rest

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "My innards are boiling and they do not rest" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

My innards are boiled and they do not rest

Job is speaking as if his **innards** have literally **boiled** and that they are literally not taking any opportunity to **rest**. This could mean: (1) that his abdomen continually has a hot, painful sensation because he is very upset and this has affected his digestion. Alternate translation: "My stomach is continually upset" (2) that he continually has feelings, which he is using his **innards** to represent, of anger and frustration. Alternate translation: "I continually feel anger and frustration" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

days of affliction confront me

Job is speaking of the difficult **days** he is experiencing as if they were living things that could **confront** him. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "I am facing day after day of affliction" or "I am experiencing day after day of affliction" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 30:28

I go about being dark not by the sun

Job means that his skin disease, **not** the **sun**, has darkened his skin, as he says explicitly in verse 30. The implication is that this darkened skin makes him appear as if he is a manual laborer who works out in the sun. [Song of Songs 1:6](#) suggests that in this culture, a person in that situation would be less respected than someone who could employ others to do outdoor work and so did not have sun-darkened skin. You could indicate this in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "My disease-darkened skin makes me appear to be a manual laborer" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I stand up in the assembly and cry out

Job may be implicitly indicating a further loss of dignity here. He has had to appeal for help in a public place where people gather. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I have had to humiliate myself by appealing for help in public" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 30:29

I have become a brother to jackals and a companion to the daughters of clamor

Job is speaking as if he had literally become a **brother** to **jackals** and a **companion** to ostriches. These wild dogs and wild birds live in deserted areas, and Job is suggesting that they are now his only relatives and friends, since he has become an outcast. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have become such an outcast that it is as if I live far away from other people" (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

to the daughters of clamor

In this context, the expression **daughters of** describes creatures that share the qualities of something. The word **clamor** is one possible meaning of an uncertain term that interpreters suggest could also mean "greed" or "the desert." Whatever the meaning of that term, interpreters agree that the reference is to ostriches. If your language can refer to this kind of bird with a descriptive phrase rather than with a name, you could use that phrase in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "to ostriches" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

to the daughters of clamor

An ostrich is a large, heavy bird that cannot fly but can run very fast. If your readers would not be familiar with ostriches, in your translation you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "to large, flightless, desert birds" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 30:30

My skin is black from upon me

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "My skin has turned black and it is falling off from upon me" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and my bone burns from heat

Job is using one part of himself, a **bone**, to mean all of him in the act of feeling hot. He is likely referring to the **heat** of fever. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and my body is hot with fever" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 30:31

So my harp is to mourning and my flute to the sound of ones weeping

Job is using musical instruments, the **harp** and the **flute**, to represent happiness, by association with the way that people play music when they are happy. He is using **mourning** and **the sound of weeping** to represent sorrow, since people mourn and weep when they are sad. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "So while I used to be joyful, now I am very sorrowful" (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

Job 31

Job 31 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the conclusion of Job's final response to his three friends.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Important Figures of Speech in This Chapter

Litany

In verses 1–34 and 38–40, Job swears a series of oaths to insist on his innocence. Typically he uses a statement that begins with “if” to suggest something he might have done wrong, and he then uses a statement that uses verbal forms such as “may” or “let” to wish that he would receive an appropriate punishment if he has indeed committed such a sin. In some cases, rather than wish for punishment, Job gives a reason why he would not have committed the sin he has described. In some other cases, Job makes only the “if” statement, leaving the rest of the conditional statement to be inferred. Notes throughout the chapter indicate how Job responds to each of the “if” statements that he makes.

A series of similar statements such as this is known as a litany. If your readers would recognize what Job is doing, you can translate and format this litany the way the ULT does. If the litany form would not be familiar to your readers, you could help them appreciate it by putting each sentence of the litany on a separate line. See what you did with the similar litanies in chapters 9, 12, 26, and 29. (See: [rc://ta/man/translate/figs-litany](#) and [rc://ta/man/translate/writing-oathformula](#))

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Job's understanding of appropriate punishment for sin

In this chapter, Job insists that he has been righteous by wishing aloud that he would receive the just punishment for any crimes that he may have committed. In most cases, Job himself would suffer the punishment that he describes. But in verses 9 and 10, Job says that if he has committed adultery with another man's wife, then may other men have sexual relations with his wife. It seems that Job is wishing that God would punish his wife for something that he himself had done. Since the book describes Job as a wise and righteous, it appears that readers are supposed to consider that this would be a just punishment, but it does not seem to be just or fair. One way to understand this may be to consider that Job is saying that if he has been unfaithful to his wife, then may his wife be unfaithful to him in return. This is not the ideal that the Bible as a whole teaches. As Christians, we are not supposed to take revenge on others by doing to them what they have done to us. But in this specific context, in which Job is swearing oaths to guarantee his innocence, having his wife be unfaithful to him if he had been unfaithful to her would be a punishment that fit the crime, and Job is insisting on his innocence by saying that he is prepared to receive the punishments that fit any crimes he has committed.

Job 31:1

I have cut a covenant with my eyes

In this culture, people would say that they had **cut a covenant** because making a covenant often involved a ceremony in which the two parties would cut up an animal and walk between the cut-up pieces. [Jeremiah 34:18](#) refers to such a ceremony, and [Genesis 15:8-19](#) describes God making a covenant with Abraham in this way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have made a covenant with my eyes" (See: [Idiom \(p.1207\)](#))

I have cut a covenant with my eyes

Job is speaking of his **eyes** as if they were living things with which he could make a **covenant**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have resolved to exercise self-control regarding what I look at" (See: [Personification \(p.1253\)](#))

how then would I gaze upon a virgin

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I would not gaze upon a virgin!" (See: [Rhetorical Question \(p.1281\)](#))

how then would I gaze

Job means implicitly that he would not **gaze** lustfully. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "how then would I gaze lustfully" or "I would not gaze lustfully" (See: [Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information \(p.1143\)](#))

upon a virgin

Job is using one kind of woman, a **virgin**, to mean women in general. He is not saying that if a woman had not had sexual relations with anyone, he would not look at her lustfully, but if a woman had had sexual relations, then he might look at her lustfully. Job is mentioning a virgin as one example of a woman whom he might be tempted to look at that way. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "at a woman" (See: [Synecdoche \(p.1294\)](#))

Job 31:2

For what {would be} the portion from God above, or the inheritance from the Almighty in the heights

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. This could mean: (1) a good **portion** and **inheritance** as a reward for obedience. These terms typically have a positive meaning. Alternate translation: "For then there would be no portion from God above or inheritance from the Almighty in the heights!" (2) a bad **portion** and **inheritance**, that is, a punishment, for disobedience. This would mean the same thing that Job says in the next verse. Alternate translation: "For then the portion from God above would not be good, nor the inheritance from the Almighty in the heights" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

would be} the portion from God above, or the inheritance from the Almighty in the heights

Depending on the meaning (see previous note), Job is speaking as if either a reward or punishment from God would literally be a **portion** or a share in an **inheritance**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: (1) "the reward from God above, or the blessing from the Almighty" or (2) "the punishment from God above, or the chastisement from the Almighty" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

or the inheritance from

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "or what would be the inheritance" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

in the heights

See how you translated this same expression in [25:1](#). Alternate translation: "in highest heaven" (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 31:3

Is} not calamity for the unrighteous and disaster for doers of wickedness

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "After all, calamity is for the unrighteous, and disaster for doers of wickedness!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

for the unrighteous

Job is using the adjective **unrighteous** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "for unrighteous people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

for doers of wickedness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wickedness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "for people who do wicked things" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 31:4

Does he not see my ways and count all my steps

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "Certainly God sees my ways and counts all my steps!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

my ways

Job is speaking of how he has been living as if that were a series of **ways** or paths that he has been walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "how I have been living" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and count all my steps

Within the image of life as a series of paths, Job is speaking as if God would literally **count** each of the **steps** he was taking. By **steps**, he probably means individual actions, and by **count**, he probably means that God notices each one specifically. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and take note of each of my actions" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 31:5

If I have walked with falsehood

Job is speaking of **falsehood** as if it were a living thing with which he could have **walked**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If I have conducted myself with falsehood" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

If I have walked with falsehood

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **falsehood**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "If I have conducted myself dishonestly" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

or my foot has hurried to deceit

Job is using one part of himself, his **foot**, to mean all of him in the act of hurrying or being eager to do something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "or I have hurried to deceit" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

or my foot has hurried to deceit

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **deceit**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "or I have eagerly done something deceitful" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 31:6

let him weigh me in balances of righteousness, and God will know my integrity

In this verse, Job interrupts the if-then statement he is making in verses 5, 7, and 8. He does that in order to assert that if God judges him fairly, then God will recognize that he does not deserve the punishment he describes in verse 8 or any of the other punishments he describes in this chapter. If it would be clearer in your language, you could put this assertion before the if-then statement by creating a verse bridge for verses 5–6. It might say something like this: “Now if God would weigh me in balances of righteousness, then he would know my integrity. If I have walked with falsehood or my foot has hurried to deceit” (See: **Verse Bridges (p.1301)**)

let him weigh me in balances of righteousness

Job is speaking as if God might literally **weigh** him in a set of **balances**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “let him judge me by standards of righteousness” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

let him weigh me in balances of righteousness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **righteousness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “let him judge me in a way that is right” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

my integrity

See how you translated the term **integrity** in [2:3](#). Alternate translation: “that I live in the right way” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 31:7

if my step has turned aside from the way

Job is using one part of himself, a **step** that he would take, to mean all of him in the act of walking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if I have turned aside from the way" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

if my step has turned aside from the way

Job is speaking of the right manner in which to live as if it were a **way** or path that people should walk along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if I have failed to live correctly" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

my heart & a spot

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "if my heart ... if a spot" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

or my heart has gone after my eyes

Job is speaking of his **heart** and his **eyes** as if they were living things that could go places, the eyes going somewhere first and the heart following. Here Job is using his **heart** to mean his desires and his **eyes** to mean what he sees. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "or if I have seen something that did not belong to me but I have coveted it for myself" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

or a spot has stuck to my hands

As in 17:9, Job is speaking as if people who are innocent of wrongdoing literally have clean **hands**, so that when he speaks of a **spot** or stain having **stuck** to his **hands**, he is raising the issue of whether he has done something wrong. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "or I have done something morally wrong" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 31:8

let me sow and may another eat

Job means implicitly that if he has done any of the wrong things he has just listed, then the appropriate punishment would be for someone else to **eat** the crops that grew from seeds he would **sow**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “may someone else eat the crops that grow from the seeds that I sow” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 31:9

If my heart has been opened by a woman

When Job speaks of whether his **heart** has been **opened** by a **woman**, he is using an expression that means to be enticed by a woman. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If my heart has been enticed by a woman" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If my heart has been opened by a woman

Job is using one part of himself, his **heart**, meaning his desires, to mean all of him in the act of being enticed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If I have been enticed by a woman" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

If my heart has been opened by a woman

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. However, be careful to translate Job's meaning accurately. Job is not describing a situation in which a woman would be essentially responsible for seducing him. He is describing a situation in which he would not have exercised self-control over what he looked at (as described in verse 1) and in which he allowed the beauty of a woman to entice him to do something he knew was wrong. Alternate translation: "If I have allowed a woman to entice me" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and I have lurked at the door of my neighbor

The implication is that this **woman** is married and that Job would have waited in hiding outside her **door** for her to open the door and let him come into her home and have sexual relations with her at a time when her husband was away. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and I have waited for my neighbor's wife to let me into her home so that I could have sexual relations with her" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 31:10

may my wife grind for another

Job is using the term **grind**, meaning to grind grain, by association to mean “be a concubine,” since concubines did the work of grinding grain for their masters, who were also their husbands. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. See the General Notes to this chapter for a further discussion of this verse. Alternate translation: “may my wife become the concubine of another man” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and may others bow down upon her

Job is using the phrase **bow down upon** to mean “have sexual relations with.” This is mild way of referring to something that is usually done in private. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: “and may others sleep with her” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

Job 31:11

For that {would be} lewdness

The pronoun **that** refers to what Job described in verse 9, not to what he described in verse 10. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "For if I had sexual relations with another man's wife, that would be lewdness" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and it would be iniquity of judges

Job is using this possessive form to describe **iniquity** that **judges** would punish, not iniquity that judges would commit. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "and judges would certainly punish such iniquity" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 31:12

For

Job is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he would not commit adultery, not the reason why judges would punish adultery. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I would not commit adultery, because I know that" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

it {is} a fire

The pronoun **it** refers to adultery. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "adultery is a fire" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

it {is} a fire

Job is speaking as if adultery were literally a **fire**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it is very destructive" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it consumes unto Abaddon

Job is speaking of the **fire** that he is using to represent adultery as if it burns everything in its path right down to the underworld. As a note to [26:6](#) explains, the word **Abaddon** is another name for Sheol. However, the word literally means "destruction," and Job may be using it in that sense, even within the image of this fire. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it burns until everything before it is completely destroyed" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and it would uproot all of my harvest וּבְכַל-תְּבַ וְאֶת־יְתֻשְׁתִּי

Job is also speaking as if adultery were something that would **uproot** his entire **harvest**. He is probably using this image to represent the loss of all of his possessions. [Proverbs 6:26-35](#) indicates that in this culture, men found guilty of adultery could have to pay great amounts in fines and compensation. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and it could cost me all of my possessions" or "and it could make me lose all of my wealth" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 31:13

If I disdained the justice of my male servant or my female servant

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **justice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "If I did not consider it important to treat my male servant or my female servant justly"
(See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 31:14

then what would I do if God arose? Or if he visited, how would I answer him

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: “then I would not be able to do anything if God arose, or if he visited, I would not be able to answer him” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

God arose

Job is asking implicitly what he would do if God **arose** or stood up to bring charges against him. As a note to [20:27](#) explains, in order to begin a case against someone, people in this culture would stand up among those who had gathered in the public square. See how you translated the similar expression in [20:27](#). Alternate translation: “God stood up to bring charges against me” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Or if he visited

Job is using the term **visited** in a particular sense. When applied to God, the term often indicates that God takes action in the life of a person or group, whether to help needy people or to punish guilty people. For example, [Ruth 1:6](#) says that Naomi, who had left Israel because of a famine, returned there after she heard that “Yahweh had visited his people, giving them bread.” Here the sense is that God would “visit” Job to help Job’s servants and to punish him for mistreating them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Or if he came to help my servants” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 31:15

Did not the one making me in the belly make him? And did {not} one fashion us in the womb

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "After all, the one who made me in the belly also made him. Indeed, the same person fashioned us both in the womb." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Did & make him

Although the pronoun **him** is masculine, Job is using the word in a generic sense that refers both to the "male servant" and "female servant" whom he describes in verse 13. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an expression in your language that would indicate this. Alternate translation: "Did ... make my male servant and my female servant" or "Did ... make them" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

And did {not} one fashion us

By **us**, Job means himself and his servants but not the friends to whom he is speaking, so use the exclusive form of that word in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.1181)**)

Job 31:16

from the desire of the poor

Job is using this possessive form to describe something that the **poor** would **desire**. The sense is that they would desire this because they needed it. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “something that the poor desired” or “something that the poor needed” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

the poor

Job is using the adjective **poor** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “poor people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

or I have made the eyes of the widow fail

Job is using one part of this **widow**, her **eyes**, to mean all of her in the act of looking for help, that is, expecting and awaiting help. If her eyes were to **fail**, that would mean that she had given up hope of receiving the help she needed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “or if I have neglected to help a widow for so long that she gave up hope of receiving help” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the widow

Job is not referring to a specific **widow**. He means any widow who might have needed help. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using an indefinite article. Alternate translation: “a widow” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 31:17

the fatherless

Job is using the adjective **fatherless** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “the fatherless person” or “the orphan” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the fatherless

Job is not referring to a specific **fatherless** person. He means any orphan who might have needed food. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “any orphan who might have needed food” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 31:18

for

Job is using the word **for** to introduce the reason why he does not even need to specify a consequence in this case if he has committed the sins he has just described. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “but I do not even need to say what God should do to me if I have done those things, because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

from my youth & and from the belly of my mother

Job says **from my youth** and **from the belly of my mother** as overstatements for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “throughout my life ... and continually” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

he has grown up with me & I have guided her

The pronoun **he** refers to the representative orphan whom Job described in the verse 17, and the pronoun **her** refers to the representative widow he described in verse 16. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “the orphan has grown up with me ... I have guided the widow” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 31:19

for the needy

Job is using the adjective **needy** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “for a needy person” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

for the needy

Job is not referring to a specific **needy** person. He means any person who might have needed a **covering**, probably meaning an outer garment that would also have served as a blanket. You could indicate in your translation whom Job means if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “for any person who needed one” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 31:20

if his loins have not blessed me and he has {not} warmed himself from the wool of my sheep

Since this representative needy person may have first **warmed himself** with a garment that Job provided and then **blessed** Job for this practical help, it may be more natural to reverse the order of these clauses. Alternate translation: "if he has not warmed himself from the wool of my sheep and blessed me for my kindness" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

if his loins have not blessed me

Job is using one part of this representative needy person, his **loins**, to mean all of him in the act of blessing Job. Job probably chooses the waist area to symbolize this person because that is the area that a person who needed clothing would cover first. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "if he has not blessed me" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and & from the wool of my sheep

Job is using this phrase by association to mean a garment that someone in his household would have woven from **wool** that his **sheep** had produced. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and ... with a warm woolen garment that I provided" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 31:21

if I have shaken my hand against the fatherless

Shaking the **hand**, probably formed into a fist, **against** someone would be a symbolic action that threatened harm if the person did not acquiesce to one's wishes. In this context, it would be a gesture that threatened severe consequences if an opponent in court did not agree to settle a case on favorable terms. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "if I have tried to intimidate the fatherless into settling a case in my favor" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

I saw my help at the gate

Job is using the term **gate** by association to mean the community court, which would hold its sessions in the public square near the city gate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I saw that there were people in court who would take my side" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 31:22

yes, may my arm be broken from its socket

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "yes, may my arm break off from its socket" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 31:23

For

Job is using the word **For** to reassert the reason why he did not commit any of the crimes he has been describing. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “No, I did not do any of those things, because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

the destruction of God

Job is using this possessive form to describe the **destruction** of a wicked person by **God**, not the destruction of God by anything. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “the knowledge that God destroys wicked people” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

and from his majesty, I was not able

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Job is referring to neglecting the poor and intimidating the fatherless, as he described in verses 19–21. Alternate translation: “and because of his majesty, I was not able to do any of those things” or “and because of his majesty, I could not have done any of those things” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 31:24

and I have said to fine gold, 'My confidence

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "and I have told fine gold that it was my confidence" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

and I have said to fine gold, 'My confidence

If Job had spoken to **fine gold** in this way, he would have been speaking to something that he knew could not hear him in order to show in a strong way how he felt about it. If a speaker in your language would not do that, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I have said that fine gold was my confidence" (See: **Apostrophe (p.1139)**)

and I have said to fine gold, 'My confidence

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **confidence**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and I have said that I was confiding in fine gold" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 31:25

and because my hand had acquired much

In this instance, Job is swearing an oath by stating the first part of a condition (“if”) but not the second part (“then”). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explicitly state the implied second part of this condition. You could use the same language that Job uses in verses 11 and 28, or you could use plain language. Alternate translation: “and because my hand had acquired much, then judges would certainly punish such iniquity” or “and because my hand had acquired much, then I would certainly deserve punishment” (See: **Oath Formulas (p.1248)**)

my hand had acquired much

Job is using one part of himself, his **hand**, to mean all of him in the act of acquiring wealth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “I had acquired much” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

much

Job is using the adjective **much** as a noun to mean wealth in quantity. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “a fortune” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 31:26

the light

Job is using the term **light** by association to mean the sun. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the sun” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

or the moon walking

Job is speaking as if the **moon** were literally **walking** across the sky. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “or the moon moving across the sky” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 31:27

and my heart opened

See how you translated the similar expression about the “heart” being “opened” in [31:9](#). Alternate translation: “and I was attracted to the sun or the moon” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and my hand kissed my mouth

Job is speaking as if his **hand** were a living thing that could have **kissed** his **mouth**. He means that if he had wanted to offer worship to the sun or the moon, following the customs of this culture, he would have touched his hand to his mouth in a kiss and then waved the kiss up to the sun or the moon. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “and I had blown a kiss to the sun or the moon” or “and I had worshiped the sun or the moon” (See: **Personification (p. 1253)**)

Job 31:28

this also {would be} iniquity of judges

See how you translated the expression **iniquity of judges** in [31:11](#). Alternate translation: “judges would certainly also punish such iniquity” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 31:29

or lifted myself up

This expression means to consider oneself in a better position than another who has suffered a misfortune. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “or gloated” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

because evil found him

Job is speaking of **evil** as if it were a living thing that could have **found** someone who hated him. Here the word **evil** has the sense of “misfortune” rather than of moral wrong. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “because he suffered misfortune” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

because evil found him

This is the conclusion of an oath that Job is swearing in this verse. See what you did in [31:25](#), where Job similarly does not state the second part of the condition in an oath that he is swearing. Alternate translation: “because evil found him, then judges would certainly punish such iniquity” or “because evil found him, then I would certainly deserve punishment” (See: **Oath Formulas (p.1248)**)

Job 31:30

For I have not caused my palate to sin

Job is speaking as if his **palate** or mouth were a living thing that he could have caused to **sin**. He means that he himself could have sinned in something that he said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "For I have not said something sinful" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 31:31

If the men of my tent have not said, Who will give one {who} has not been satisfied from his flesh

As in 31:25 and 31:29, here Job does not state the second part of the condition in an oath that he is swearing. See what you did in those verses. Alternate translation: "If the men of my tent have not said, 'Who will give one who has not been satisfied from his flesh?' then judges would certainly punish such iniquity" or "If the men of my tent have not said, 'Who will give one {who} has not been satisfied from his flesh?' then I would certainly deserve punishment" (See: **Oath Formulas (p.1248)**)

If the men of my tent have not said, Who will give one {who} has not been satisfied from his flesh

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "If the men of my tent have not asked who could show one who has not been satisfied from my flesh!" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

the men of my tent

Job is using the term **tent** by association to mean his household. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the men of my household" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the men of my tent

Although Job refers to his male and female servants separately in 31:13, Job is likely using the masculine term **men** here in a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "the men and women of my household" or "my servants" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Who will give one {who} has not been satisfied from his flesh

Job's servants would be using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. (In this context, unlike elsewhere in the book, the expression **Who will give** does not express a wish. The servants are not saying, "We wish there was one who has not been satisfied.") Alternate translation: "No one can show anyone who has not been satisfied from his flesh!" or, positively, "Everyone has been satisfied from his flesh!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

one {who} has not been satisfied

As the next verse shows, Job's servants would be speaking implicitly of hungry people. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "a hungry person who has not been satisfied" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

from his flesh

Job's servants would be using the term **flesh** by association to mean meat and, by further association, food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from his food" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 31:32

The sojourner has not stayed overnight in the outdoors

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative phrase **stayed overnight in the outdoors**. Alternate translation: "I have allowed the sojourner to stay in my home" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

The sojourner has not stayed overnight & to the traveler

Job is not referring to a specific **sojourner** or to a specific **traveler**. He means sojourners and travelers in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "Sojourners have not stayed overnight ... to travelers" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

I have opened my doors to the traveler

Job is using one thing he would do to provide hospitality, open his **doors**, to mean the entire act of providing hospitality. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have provided hospitality to travelers" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 31:33

like man

The word translated **man** could mean: (1) even though it is masculine, humanity in general, including both men and women. Alternate translation: “as people do” (2) Adam, the first man whom God created and who tried to hide from God when he realized that he had sinned. (However, many interpreters question whether Job would have been familiar with the book of Genesis.) Alternate translation: “like Adam” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

I have concealed my sins by hiding my guilt in my chest

Job is speaking as if **guilt** were an object that he could **hide** in his chest. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “I have concealed the guilt of my sins by keeping it inside” or “I have concealed my sins by not telling anyone about what I was guilty of doing” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 31:34

I did not go out the door

Job is using a thing he would do to confess his sins publicly, **go out the door**, to mean the entire act of making a public confession. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I did not confess my sin publicly" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

I did not go out the door

This is the conclusion of an oath that Job is swearing in this verse. See what you did in [31:25](#), where Job similarly does not state the second part of the condition in an oath that he is swearing. Alternate translation: "I did not go out the door, then judges would certainly punish such iniquity" or "I did not go out the door, then I would certainly deserve punishment" (See: **Oath Formulas (p.1248)**)

Job 31:35

Who will give to me one hearing me

See how you translated the expression **Who will give** in 11:5–6. Alternate translation: “I wish that I had someone who was hearing me!” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

one hearing me

By **one hearing me**, Job implicitly means someone impartial “hearing” his case in the judicial sense and judging it. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “someone impartial who will judge between me and God” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Behold, my mark

It appears that in this culture, both parties in a legal proceeding would submit their arguments to the court in writing and that they would sign them with their names or with a **mark** to authenticate them. Job is speaking as if he is putting his mark on a written record of his testimony in order to declare that everything he has just said is true. (It seems unlikely that he has actually put all of his testimony in writing, since this is not an actual court proceeding and God would not be submitting a corresponding written document.) You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “I certify that I have been telling the truth” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

And the scroll that the man of my case has written

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “And who will give to me the scroll that the man of my case has written?” or “And I wish that I had the scroll that the man of my case has written!” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

the man of my case

This expression refers to an opponent in a legal proceeding. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my opponent” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 31:36

If I would not bear it on my shoulder

Job is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I would bear it on my shoulder, would I not?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If I would not bear it on my shoulder

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I would certainly bear it on my shoulder!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If I would not bear it on my shoulder

Job is speaking as if he would literally **bear** his opponent's written legal argument against him on his **shoulder**. He means that he would have no reason to be ashamed of any of the accusations, knowing that they would be proven false and his honor would be vindicated. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "I would wear it as a badge of honor!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

I would bind it to me {as} crowns

Job is using the plural form **crowns** to refer to a crown of superlative quality. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: "I would wear it on my head as a splendid crown" or "I would wrap it around my head as a splendid garland" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 31:37

my steps

Job is speaking of his actions as if they were **steps** along a path that he had been walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “my actions” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

like a noble

The point of this comparison is that just as a **noble** does things confidently and with self-assurance because of his position, so Job would **approach** the Almighty confidently, knowing that he was innocent. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: “confidently” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 31:38

If my soil cries out against me and its furrows weep together

Job is speaking of the **soil** on his land and its **furrows** as if they were living things that could cry out for justice and **weep** because of oppression. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly, in light of what Job says in the next verse. Alternate translation: "If I have committed a sin in the way that I have used my land" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 31:39

without silver

Job is using the term **silver** by association to mean money, since silver was used as money in this culture. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “without paying for it” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

or caused the breath of its masters to expire

This could mean: (1) that as a poetic way of referring to death, Job is speaking of how someone might **expire** or breathe out **breath**. He would mean implicitly that he had not even left the people who were farming his land enough crops to live on. Alternate translation: “or caused its masters to die of starvation” (2) that Job had grieved the people who were farming his land by oppressing them, though he had not actually caused them to die. The word translated **breath** can also mean “soul,” and the word translated **expire** could mean “sigh.” In that case Job would be using the souls of these farmers to mean the farmers themselves. Alternate translation: “or caused the souls of its masters to sigh” or “or caused its masters to sigh from oppression” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

its masters

In this context, the term **masters** describes people who are farming the land, not people who own it. It could refer to people who were tenants of land that Job owned. In that case, they would likely be sharecropping, that is, growing crops on Job’s land in exchange for giving him a share of the crops. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “its tenants” or “its sharecroppers” or “the people who were farming it” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 31:40

may a thorn grow instead of wheat and a weed instead of barley

Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “may a thorn grow instead of wheat, and may a weed grow instead of barley” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

may a thorn grow instead of wheat and a weed instead of barley

Job is not referring to a specific **thorn** or to a specific **weed**. He means thorns and weeds in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: “may thorns grow instead of wheat, and may weeds grow instead of barley” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

The words of Job have ended

The narrator is using the term **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “This is the end of what Job said” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 32

Job 32 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter introduces a younger man named Elihu, who has been listening to the conversation between Job and his three friends. Elihu explains that he waited for the friends to speak first, out of respect for their age. But since they have not been able to answer Job effectively, he would now like to speak himself. Elihu continues to speak through chapter 37.

The ULT sets the lines 32:6–22 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because those verses are poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Reference of “you” and “your”

In verses 6 and 11–14, Elihu says “you” and “your” in order to refer to Job’s three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

“words” meaning speaking or what a person says

Several times in verses 11–18, Elihu uses the term “words” to mean speaking or what a person says by using words. The narrator also uses the term in that sense in verse 4. Notes suggest ways to translate the term “words” in these various individual contexts.

Job 32:1

the three of these men

By **the three of these men**, the narrator implicitly means Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in his eyes

The narrator is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. Sight, in turn, represents attention, perspective, and judgment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “in his own perspective” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 32:2

Then the nose burned of Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, from the clan of Ram. His nose burned against Job

See how you translated the word **nose** in 9:5. The narrator is speaking as if Elihu's **nose** or anger could literally have **burned**. He means that Elihu became very angry. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, became very angry. He became very angry against Job" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Then & burned

The narrator is using the word translated **Then** to introduce a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. (See: **Introduction of a New Event (p.1215)**)

Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, from the clan of Ram

The author is introducing **Elihu** as a new participant in the story by naming his father, his people group, and his clan. If your language has its own way of introducing new participants, you can use it here in your translation. You may wish to indicate in your translation, as the UST does, that Elihu had been listening as Job spoke with his three friends. (See: **Introduction of New and Old Participants (p.1218)**)

Elihu & Barakel the Buzite, & Ram

The words **Elihu**, **Barakel**, and **Ram** are the names of men. **Buzite** is the name of the people group to which Elihu belonged. The term identifies him as one of the descendants of a man named Buz. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

Job 32:3

his nose burned

See how you translated the similar expression in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “he became very angry” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

but they had declared Job wrong

A marginal notation in traditional manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible indicates that scribes changed this reading from “they had declared God wrong” to **they had declared Job wrong**. The scribes made this change in order to avoid the uncomfortable suggestion that God could be declared wrong. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of ULT. Alternate translation: “and so they had made it appear as if God were wrong” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

Job 32:4

Now Elihu had awaited Job with words, because they {were} older in days than he {was}

If it would be more natural in your language, you could reverse the order of these phrases, since the second phrase gives the reason for the result that the first phrase describes. Alternate translation: “Now Job’s friends were much older than Elihu, so he had waited until they had finished speaking to Job before he spoke himself” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

Now Elihu had awaited Job with words, because

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the narrator is using the term **words** to mean what Elihu wanted to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Now Elihu had waited to speak to Job because” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

they {were} older in days

See how you translated the similar expression in [30:1](#). Alternate translation: “they were older in age” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 32:5

there was no answer in the mouths of the three of the men

The narrator is speaking as if an **answer** were an object that could have been in the **mouths** of Job's friends. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Job's three friends could say nothing further to answer him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 32:6

And & answered and said

As the General Introduction to Job discusses, this phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **answered** tells for what purpose a person **said** something. Specifically, the person said it in order to answer or respond to what someone else said. See how you have been translating this expression. Alternate translation: "And ... responded" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

in days

Elihu is using the term **days** to refer to his age. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "in age" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and you

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the word **you** is plural here because Elihu is addressing Job's three friends, so use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

Job 32:7

I said, 'Let days speak, and let a multitude of years teach wisdom

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "I told myself that days should speak and that a multitude of years should teach wisdom" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Let days speak, and let a multitude of years teach wisdom

Elihu is speaking of **days** and **years** as if they were living things that could **speak** and **teach wisdom**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. He means that people who have lived for many days and years should do those things. Alternate translation: "Let people who have lived for many days speak; yes, let those who have lived for a multitude of years teach wisdom" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wisdom**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "what is wise" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 32:8

a spirit, it {is} in man

Elihu means implicitly that God created humans with a **spirit** as well as a body. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “man has a spirit, not just a body” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in man

Although the term **man** is masculine, Elihu is using the word in a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “in humans” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding

Elihu means implicitly that because the Almighty breathed life into humans, divinely bestowing on them the gift of life (the Bible presents this concept in [Genesis 2:7](#)), humans have **understanding**, not just instinct as animals do. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and it is because the Almighty has breathed life into them that they have understanding” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 32:9

The great are not wise, and the aged do {not} understand justice

Elihu means implicitly that it is not the **great** or the **aged** alone who are wise and understand justice. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "It is not only the great who are wise, and it is not the aged alone who understand justice" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

The great & and the aged

Elihu is using the adjectives **great** and **aged** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "Great people ... and aged people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

justice

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **justice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "what is just" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 32:10

Therefore I say, 'Listen to me; I also will declare my knowledge

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "Therefore I ask you to listen to me so that I also can declare my knowledge" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

my knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "what I know" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 32:11

for your words; & for} words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job's friends said and tried to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "for you to speak ... for something to say" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 32:12

his words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job said by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what he said" or "his arguments" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 32:13

lest you say, 'We have found wisdom

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "So do not say that you have found wisdom" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

not man

Elihu is using the masculine term **man** in a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "not a mere human being" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 32:14

Now he has not arrayed words against me

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job and his friends have been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Now Job has said nothing to provoke me, so I can speak reasonably to him, unlike you" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 32:15

They are dismayed; they do not answer any longer; words have gone from them

Elihu has been speaking directly to Job's friends in the second person, but in this verse he starts speaking about them in the third person. This could mean: (1) that Elihu is now speaking to himself, but out loud, about the people to whom he had been speaking. He would be doing that to indicate in a strong way how he feels about those people. Alternate translation: "I am indignant that Job's friends are dismayed and are no longer answering him and have nothing further to say to him" (2) that Elihu is now speaking about Job's friends to others who are present. (It is unlikely that Elihu is turning to address Job himself here; Elihu begins addressing Job directly by name in [33:1](#).) Alternate translation: "Look, all the rest of you, at how Job's friends are dismayed and are no longer answering him and have nothing further to say to him!" Since Job's friends can hear what Elihu is saying, and since he is saying it partly for their benefit, you could also continue to use the second person in your translation, as the UST does. (See: [Aside \(p.1141\)](#))

words have gone from them

Elihu is speaking of **words** as if they were living things that could have **gone** away from Job's friends. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they have nothing further to say" (See: [Personification \(p.1253\)](#))

Job 32:16

Shall I wait because they are not speaking, because they stand, they answer no more

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I shall not wait because they are not speaking, because they stand, they answer no more!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Shall I wait because they are not speaking, because they stand, they answer no more

Elihu is using a future statement to give himself an instruction or command. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words using a command or instruction form. Alternate translation: "I should not wait because they they are not speaking, because they stand, they answer no more!" (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

they stand, they answer no more

Elihu is expressing a single idea by using the two verbs **stand** and **answer**. In this context, the word **stand** means to stop doing something. He does not mean that Job's friends have stood to their feet. Alternate translation: "they have ceased to answer any more" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 32:17

my knowledge

See how you translated the similar expression in verse 10. Alternate translation: “what I know” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 32:18

I am full of words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he wants to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am full of things to say" (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

I am full of words

Elihu is speaking of himself as if he were a container that was **full of words**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I have very many things to say" (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

the spirit

By **spirit**, Elihu could mean God's Spirit, as he described in verse 8 and implied in verse 13. If this is the meaning, your language may have some convention, such as capitalization, for distinguishing God's Spirit from the spirit of a person. Alternate translation: "the Spirit" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in my belly

Elihu is using one part of himself, his **belly**, to mean all of him in the act of being compelled. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "within me" (See: **Synecdoche (p. 1294)**)

Job 32:19

is} like wine

Elihu is using the term **wine** by association to mean a wine container. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "is like a wine container" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

like new wineskins, it is bursting open

Elihu is speaking as if his **belly** were literally **bursting open** the way **new wineskins** do if they are not able to stretch enough to accommodate the gases that form as the wine inside them ferments. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I feel as if I can barely contain all the things I want to say, as if I were a new wineskin that could hardly stretch enough to contain all the gases that were forming as the wine inside it fermented" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 32:20

and refresh myself

The idea of being able to breathe freely once again is implicit in the word translated **refresh**. Your language may have an equivalent expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: "so that I can breathe a sign of relief" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I will open my lips

See how you translated the similar expression in [11:5](#). Alternate translation: "I will talk" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 32:21

a man, & a man

In both instances, the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “anyone ... anyone” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

let me not lift the face of a man

See how you translated the similar expression in [13:8](#). Alternate translation: “let me not show favoritism to anyone” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and let me not give a title to a man

Elihu may be using one thing that he might do to flatter someone, address him by an honorary **title**, to mean all the ways in which he might flatter someone. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and let me not flatter anyone” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 32:22

I do not know giving titles

This could mean: (1) that Elihu is using the word **know** in the sense of being acquainted with something. He may mean that this is not his custom. Alternate translation: "it is not my custom to address people by honorary titles" (2) that Elihu is saying that he is not skilled at **giving titles**. Alternate translation: "I am not very good at giving titles" or "I am not very good at flattery" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

my Maker would soon take me away

When Elihu says that his **Maker** (God) would **take** him **away** if he flattered people, he is referring to death in a poetic way. He means that God would punish him by killing him. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "my Maker would do away with me" (See: **Euphemism (p. 1177)**)

Job 33

Job 33 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Elihu's speech. In this chapter, Elihu addresses Job directly. He invites Job to listen to him, summarizes what Job has said, and tells Job that he is wrong that God does not respond to people. Elihu says that God speaks to people in dreams to warn them not to keep sinning. He says that God also uses sickness to correct people. The implications are that Job's sufferings are a warning from God not to sin; they are not a punishment from God for sins that Job has committed. In that sense, as Elihu says at the end of the chapter, Job has been right and his friends have been wrong about what has been happening to Job.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

ransom

In verse 24, Elihu describes how God may say of a person who is suffering because of his sin, "I have found a ransom." The term "ransom" can describe a payment that is made in exchange for someone's freedom. The term "redeem," which Elihu uses earlier in that verse, can similarly mean to make a payment in order to have someone set free. However, in this context, the term "ransom" seems to describe instead a valuable consideration, not necessarily a monetary one, that provides the grounds for sparing someone from punishment. Be sure that it is clear in your translation of this verse that God is not saying that he is going to make a payment to someone else on behalf of the suffering person.

A further implication seems to be that the person whom Elihu is describing has repented because of his sufferings after an interpreting angel has explained to him the change needed in his actions. This repentance shows that the person has responded positively to God's initiatives to get him to stop living in the wrong way and to start living in the right way once again. Be sure that it is also clear in your translation of verse 24 that there is nothing that the person has done to redeem or ransom himself. As Elihu says, God "is gracious to him." It is God who brings the sickness into the person's life to "chasten" him, and it is God who sends the angel to warn and admonish the person, and so the person is spared from punishment through the actions of God.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

"words" meaning speaking or what a person says

As in chapter 32, many times in this chapter Elihu uses the term "words" to mean speaking or what a person says by using words. Notes suggest ways to translate the term "words" in these various individual contexts.###
reference of "you" and "your"

Throughout this chapter, Elihu uses the pronouns "you" and "your" to address Job individually, so use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction.

"man" and "men" with generic meaning

In several places in this chapter, Elihu uses the words "man" and "men" in a generic sense that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. It may be helpful in your translation to say "men and women" or to use a term in your

language that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Notes suggest translation possibilities at various places (see: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**).

“seals their correction” or “terrifies them with warnings” (verse 16)

In verse 16, the ULT follows the standard Hebrew text by saying “seals their correction.” However, as a footnote in the ULT indicates, many biblical scholars believe that the original reading was more likely “terrifies them with warnings,” and some translations say that. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of the ULT.

Job 33:1

my words; & all of my words

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he wants to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “what I have to say ... all that I tell you” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 33:2

I have now opened my mouth; my tongue has spoken on my palate

Elihu is using the past tense to describe something that he intends to do in the immediate future. He is doing that in order to indicate his resolve to do what he describes. Alternate translation: "I am now about to open my mouth; my tongue is about to speak on my palate" (See: **Predictive Past (p.1265)**)

I have now opened my mouth

Elihu is using the first part of the speaking process, opening one's **mouth**, to mean the entire process of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am now about to speak" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

my tongue has spoken on my palate

Elihu is speaking of his **tongue** as if it were a living thing that could speak on its own. He means that he is about to use his tongue to form words by touching it against his **palate** and other places in his mouth. Your language may have a similar expression that you could use in your translation. Alternate translation: "the words are on the tip of my tongue" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 33:3

My words {are

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he plans to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will speak" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

from} the uprightness of my heart

Elihu is using his **heart** to represent his character. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from the uprightness of my character" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

from} the uprightness of my heart

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **uprightness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "as someone whose character is upright" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and my lips speak pure knowledge

Elihu is speaking of his **lips** as if they were living things that could **speak** on their own. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what I say will be pure knowledge" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 33:4

The Spirit of God made me; yes, the breath of the Almighty enlivened me

Elihu is reasserting the reason he gave in [32:8](#) to account for how he will be able to speak knowledgeably. See how you translated the similar expression there. Alternate translation: “I will be able to speak knowledgeably because the Spirit of God made me; yes, it was the Almighty who breathed the breath of life into me” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

Job 33:5

array & station yourself

Although they are used in other contexts as well, the words translated as **array** and **station** can have the sense of organizing troops into formations and placing them on a field of battle in order to defend a certain position. Elihu may be speaking as if Job's words were troops that he wanted him to organize and as if Job himself were an army that should make a stand on a battlefield. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "marshal your arguments ... draw up your defense" or "organize what you want to say ... prepare to defend yourself" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

to my face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "in my presence" or "to me personally" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 33:6

I am for God according to your mouth

Elihu could be using the term **mouth** to mean: (1) what Job said when he wished that God would respond to him. Job said something like this in [31:35](#) and in several other places earlier in his speeches. Alternate translation: "I will reply to you on behalf of God, as you wished" (2) Job himself. Elihu would be using part of Job, the part he has been using to pursue his case against God, to mean all of Job. If you follow this second interpretation in your translation, you may wish to put the sentence break at the end of the verse rather than in the middle of the verse, since the two halves of the verse would be parallel statements. Alternate translation: "I am just like you to God" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

I too have been formed from clay

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. If you need to say who does the action, the context suggests that it is God. Alternate translation: "God formed me too from clay" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

I too have been formed from clay

Elihu is speaking as if God had literally **formed** him from **clay**. He is indicating that he is only a mortal human being by alluding to the way that God originally formed humans from the dust of the earth. The Bible presents this concept in [Genesis 2:7](#)). As the next verse makes clear, Elihu is reassuring Job that he does not have to be afraid of how he will respond to him, in contrast with the way Job said in [30:21-23](#) and other places that he was afraid that God would respond to him violently and with great force. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am only a mortal human being" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 33:7

my fear

Elihu is using this possessive form to describe Job's fear of him, not his own fear of something. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "the fear of me" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

and my pressure will not be heavy on you

Elihu is speaking as if he might literally use his arms and hands to push down hard on Job and keep him from getting up, although he says that he will not do that. He means that he will not treat Job severely. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I will not treat you severely" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 33:8

you have spoken in my ears

Elihu is using the term **ears** by association to mean hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you have spoken in my hearing” or “you have spoken while I was listening” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and I have heard the sound of the words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job has said by using words. Elihu may be referring to the **sound** of the words to mean the exact words, that is, exactly what Job said. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and this is exactly what I heard you say” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 33:9

I {am} pure, without transgression; I {am} innocent, and iniquity {is} not to me

In this verse and the next two verses, Elihu is telling what he heard Job say. You may wish to indicate that with an introductory phrase. While Elihu quotes many words and phrases directly from Job's speeches (for example, Job described his prayer as "pure" in [16:17](#)), this is a general summary, not a series of exact quotations. Nevertheless, you may wish to present verses 9-11 as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "You have said, 'I am pure, without transgression; I am innocent, and I have no iniquity'" (See: **Quotations and Quote Margins (p.1272)**)

I {am} pure, without transgression; I {am} innocent, and iniquity {is} not to me

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate verses 9-11 so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "You have said that you are pure, without transgression; you have said that you are innocent and that you have no iniquity" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Job 33:10

Behold, he finds occasions against me; he considers me an enemy to him

Elihu is continuing to provide a general summary of what he heard Job say, directly quoting certain words and phrases. For example, Job asked God in [13:24](#) why God considered him an enemy. If you decided to translate the previous verse as an indirect quotation, you can continue to do that here. Alternate translation: "You have said that God finds occasions against you and that he considers you to be his enemy" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Job 33:11

He puts my feet in shackles; he watches all of my paths

Elihu is continuing to provide a general summary of what he heard Job say. In this verse he quotes directly what Job said in [13:27](#). If you decided to translate the previous two verses as an indirect quotation, you can continue to do that here. Alternate translation: "You have said that God puts your feet in shackles and that he watches all of your paths." (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

He puts my feet in shackles; he watches all of my paths

Job spoke as if God had literally put his **feet** in **shackles** and as if his courses of action were literally **paths** that he was walking along. If you chose to express the ideas behind these images rather than the images themselves in [13:27](#), you can do the same thing here so that it will be clear that Elihu is quoting what Job said there. (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 33:12

in} this

By **this**, Elihu seems to mean Job's belief that God was not treating him fairly, which Elihu has just summarized. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "in thinking that God is not treating you fairly," (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in} this you are not right. & for God is greater than man

If it would be more natural in your language, you could move this phrase to the start of the verse (after **Behold**), since it gives the reason why Elihu says that Job is **not right**. Alternate translation: "since God is greater than man, you have misunderstood how he is treating you" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

than man

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "than humans" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 33:13

Why do you contend against him, that he does not answer any of one's words

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You should not contend against him, that he does not answer any of one's words" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

that he does not answer any of one's words

Elihu could be saying: (1) that Job's complaint is that God has not responded to his questions and protests. In that case, Elihu would be using the term translated **words** to mean what Job has been saying. Alternate translation: "that he does not respond when one speaks to him" (2) that God does not give an account for his own actions. The term translated **words** can also describe the matters with which someone is concerned or the things that someone does. Alternate translation: "that he does not account to anyone for how he treats that person" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

that he does not answer any of one's words

Since Elihu is speaking to Job and he probably means that Job is complaining that God is not answering him, you could translate this in the second person if that would be more natural in your language. Alternate translation: "that does not answer any of your words" or "that he does not respond when you speak to him" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

that he does not answer any of one's words

It may be more natural in your language to make this a direct quotation. Alternate translation: "saying, 'He does not answer any of my words'" or "saying, 'He does not respond when I speak to him'" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1167)**)

Job 33:14

God speaks once—yes, twice

As Eliphaz did in [5:19](#), here Elihu is naming a number that should be sufficient to illustrate his point and then increasing that number by one for emphasis. This was a common device in Hebrew poetry. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could express the emphasis another way. Alternate translation: “God indeed speaks to people” (See: **Poetry (p.1255)**)

one does not perceive it

Elihu is drawing an implicit contrast between God’s genuine speaking and people’s failure to perceive it. You may wish to indicate this contrast explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: “the only problem is, people do not perceive it” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

Job 33:15

In a dream, in a vision of the night, in the falling of deep sleep upon men

Elihu is using two of the same phrases that Eliphaz used in [4:13](#) in order to make a very similar point. The implication is that Elihu believes that Eliphaz was right to say what he did. Since Elihu is echoing Eliphaz implicitly, it would probably not be appropriate to add an explicit phrase to the text saying something like “as Eliphaz said,” but it may be helpful to translate the phrases here the same way you did in [4:13](#). (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in slumbers

Elihu is using the plural form **slumbers** in a context where the singular term “slumber” would suffice. This suggests that he is using the plural form for emphasis. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: “in sound slumber” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 33:16

he opens the ear of men

Since Elihu is speaking of many people, if you retain the term **ear** in your translation, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of the word. Alternate translation: "God opens the ears of people" (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

he opens the ear of men

Elihu is using the term **ear** by association to mean hearing. When he says that God **opens** people's ears, he means that God enables them to hear. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God enables people to hear him speaking" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

he opens the ear of men

In this context, hearing represents understanding. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God enables people to understand what he is saying to them" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and seals their correction

Elihu is using the possessive form **their correction** to describe the correction that God gives to people, not the correction that people give. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "and seals the correction that he gives to them" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

and seals their correction

Elihu is speaking as if God literally placed a seal over the **correction** that he gave to people. He means that God preserves the value and influence of the correction. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and enables them to appreciate and benefit from the correction that he gives to them" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 33:17

to bring a man back from {his} doing

Elihu is speaking implicitly of a person **doing** something that was wrong. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “to bring a person back from doing what is wrong” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

to bring a man back from {his} doing

Elihu is speaking as if God would literally **bring** a person who was doing wrong **back** from a certain place. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to warn that person to stop doing what is wrong” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and to conceal pride from a man

Elihu is speaking as if **pride** were literally an object that God would **conceal** from a person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and to keep that person from becoming proud” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 33:18

He spares his soul

The pronoun **He** refers to God, and the pronoun **his** refers to a person. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "God spares a person's soul" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

his soul & and his life

Elihu is using parts of a person, his **soul** and his **life**, to mean all of him in the act of being spared from death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "him ... and he spares him" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

from crossing over

Elihu is using the phrase **crossing over** to mean "dying." This is a poetic way of referring to death; it suggests the image of crossing a river that is the boundary between one territory and another. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from dying" (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

by a weapon

Elihu is using the term **weapon** by association to being killed by a weapon. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "by being killed by a weapon" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 33:19

He is also chastened

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God also chastens a person" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and the contention of his bones {is} continual

Elihu is speaking as if there were literally **contention** or warfare among the **bones** of this person. He is using an image similar to the one that Job used in [30:17](#) when he said, "Night pierces my bones." Job meant that he got a stabbing sensation of pain in his body when he lay down at night. Here Elihu speaks similarly as if Job's bones were being wounded in battle and Job was feeling the pain of that. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he feels continual discomfort in his body" (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

Job 33:20

and his soul food of desire

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and his soul abhors food of desire” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

his life & and his soul

Elihu is using parts of a person, his **life** and his **soul**, to mean all of him in the act of abhorring food. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he ... and he abhors” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

bread

Elihu is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “food” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

food of desire

Elihu is using this possessive form to describe **food** that a person would especially **desire**, not food that belongs to desire. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “desirable food” or “delicacies” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 33:21

and his bones, not seen, are exposed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "and his bones, which people could not see before, become visible" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 33:22

his soul & and his life

Elihu is using parts of a person, his **soul** and his **life**, to mean all of him in the act of approaching death. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he ... and he draws near” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

to the ones causing death

Elihu may be referring implicitly to specific angels who were believed to be agents through whom God caused people to die. (There are suggestions of this in [2 Samuel 24:16](#) and [Psalm 78:49](#).) You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “to the angels of death” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 33:23

If

Elihu is drawing an implicit contrast between the angels of death whom he described in the previous verse and the type of angel he describes in this verse, who helps keep a person from going “down to the pit” (as he says in the next verse). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate the contrast explicitly in your translation.

Alternate translation: “But if” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

an interpreter

The word translated **interpreter** is used elsewhere in the Bible to mean someone who translates what someone says in one language into another language, for example, in Genesis 42:23. Here, however, it implicitly means someone who speaks on behalf of another person, not necessarily translating what that person says into another language. Alternate translation: “an advocate” or “a spokesman” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

one of a thousand

Elihu does not necessarily mean that exactly **one** out of every **thousand** angels is an interpreter such as he describes. Instead, this expression may mean in a general sense that such angels are rare. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “that rare kind of angel” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

to declare to a man his uprightness

This could mean: (1) that the angel would **declare** to a person how he would need to change his actions so that he would be upright or have a right standing with God (**his** would refer to the person) or so that his actions would conform to God’s **uprightness** (**his** would refer to God). Alternate translation: “to declare to a person how he needs to change his actions in order to become upright” (2) that the angel would **declare** to God on behalf of a person (the word translated **to** would mean “for”) that the person was upright or had the potential to change his actions and become upright and so did not need to die. Alternate translation: “to declare to God on a person’s behalf that he is upright” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 33:24

and he is gracious to him

The pronoun **he** refers to God and the pronoun **him** refers to the person whom Elihu has been describing. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “and God is gracious to that person” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and says, Redeem him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “and tells the angels of death to spare him from going down to the pit because he has found a ransom” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

I have found a ransom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **ransom**, you could express the same idea in another way. See the discussion of this idea in the General Notes to this chapter. Alternate translation: “I have found a good reason to spare him” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

I have found a ransom

The word **found** does not mean that God did not know where this **ransom** was and had to look for it and finally found it. Rather, it means that when the suffering person repented, this was a consideration that helped provide grounds for sparing him. (See the discussion in the General Notes to this chapter.) You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “I have recognized a good reason to spare him” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 33:25

his flesh

Elihu is using one part of this person's body, his **flesh**, to mean his whole body in the act of being rejuvenated. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "his body" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

it returns to the days of his youth

Elihu is speaking of this person's **flesh** as if it were a living thing that could go back in time to his **youth**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it becomes as it was in the days of his youth" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

to the days of his youth

Elihu is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to the time of his youth" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 33:26

and he will accept him, and he will see his face with joy

The pronoun **he** means God in the first instance and, in the second instance, **he** means the person whom Elihu has been describing. The pronoun **him** refers to this person, and the pronoun **his** refers to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “and God will accept this person, and the person will see God’s face with joy” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and he will see his face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Based on what Elihu says in the next two verses, this probably means that he will come into God’s presence in a temple. Alternate translation: “and he will come into God’s presence in a temple” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and he will restore to the man his righteousness

This could mean: Alternate translation: (1) “for God will restore the man to a right standing with him” or (2) “and God will restore his reputation as a righteous person” or (3) “and God will set things right for the man again” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 33:27

He will sing to men

Elihu assumes that Job will understand that by **sing**, he means that the person will go to a temple and publicly sing a song of thanksgiving to celebrate how God has delivered him, as was the custom in this culture. You could say that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "He will sing a song of thanksgiving in a temple" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and say, I sinned and I turned aside uprightness, but he did not requite to me

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "and say that he sinned and turned aside uprightness but that God did not requite to him" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

and I turned aside uprightness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **uprightness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and I turned aside what was right" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and I turned aside uprightness

Elihu is speaking of **uprightness** as if it were a living thing that had been walking down the right path and he **turned it aside** so that it began going down the wrong path. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I did what was not right" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 33:28

He has redeemed my soul from going over into the pit, and my life will see light

If you decided in the previous verse to translate this quotation in such a way that there would not be a quotation within a quotation, you can continue doing that here. Alternate translation: "He will say that God has redeemed his soul from going over into the pit and that his life will see light" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

my soul & and my life

Elihu is using parts of this person, his **soul** and his **life**, to mean all of him in the act of being redeemed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "me ... and I" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and my life will see light

This person is using the term **light** by association to mean life on earth. As in many other places in the book, here the realm of the living is described as a place of light, by contrast with the realm of the dead, which is a place of darkness. (For example, in [18:18](#), "They will drive him from light into darkness, and they will chase him from the world.") If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I will continue to live on earth" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 33:29

twice, thrice

As he did in verse 14, here Elihu is naming a number that should be sufficient to illustrate his point and then increasing that number by one for emphasis. This was a common device in Hebrew poetry. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could express the emphasis another way. Alternate translation: “again and again” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

Job 33:30

his soul

Elihu is using one part of this person, his **soul**, to mean all of him. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “him” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

for being enlightened with the light of the living

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “so that he can enlighten him with the light of the living” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

for being enlightened with the light of the living

Elihu is using the plural adjective **living** as a noun to mean a certain group of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “so that he can enlighten him with the light of living people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

for being enlightened with the light of the living

Elihu is using the possessive form, **the light of the living**, to describe the light that living people have and by which they see, not light that living people give off. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “so that he can enlighten him with the light that living people have” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

for being enlightened with the light of the living

As in verse 38, the term **light** refers by association to life on earth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “so that he can restore him to life among the other people who live on earth” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 33:31

and I will speak

For emphasis, Elihu is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **speak**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “and let me be the one who speaks” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 33:32

If

Since Elihu told Job in the previous verse to **listen** and be **silent**, when he tells him in this verse to **speak** and **answer**, he implicitly means that Job should do this only after listening to him. You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Then if” (See: **Connect — Sequential Time Relationship (p.1161)**)

there are words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job would say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “you have something to say” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

I desire to justify you

Elihu seems to mean that he desires to show that Job has been right in saying that God is not punishing him for committing sin. Elihu has been suggesting that Job's sufferings are instead a warning from God not to take a sinful course of action. You could indicate that explicitly in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “I am trying to show that you have been right in saying that God is not punishing you for committing sin” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 33:33

If

Elihu is implicitly drawing a contrast, suggesting that, on the other hand, Job may not have anything to say once he has listened to him further. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate the contrast explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: “But if” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

you listen to me

For emphasis, Elihu is stating the pronoun **you**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **listen**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “you be the one who listens while I speak” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wisdom**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “what is wise” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 34

Job 34 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Elihu's speech. In this chapter, Elihu speaks first to Job's friends and others who may be listening, then from verse 16 onward he addresses Job directly, and then he speaks again to the others about Job starting in verse 34.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Elihu speaking harshly about Job

It may be puzzling to your readers that while Elihu promises Job in 33:7 that he will be gentle with him, in this chapter, in verses 7–8 and 35, Elihu speaks very harshly about Job. However, this is really a matter of interpretation rather than translation, so it is not necessary to offer an explanation within the text of your translation.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Elihu quoting Job and his friends

In several places in this chapter, Elihu directly quotes Job or his friends. He does this to affirm what the friends said and to challenge what Job said. To help your readers appreciate that Elihu is doing this, you may wish to translate his expressions the same way you translated them when Job or his friends used them. In 34:3, Elihu quotes what Job said in 12:11. In 34:5, Elihu quotes what Job said in 27:2. In 34:6, Elihu quotes what Job said in 6:4, 16:13, and 27:4. In 34:7, Elihu quotes what Eliphaz said in 15:16. In 34:12, Elihu quotes what Bildad said in 8:3.

“man” and “men” with generic meaning

In several places in this chapter, Elihu uses the words “man” and “men” in a generic sense that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. It may be helpful in your translation to say “men and women” or to use a term in your language that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Notes suggest ways in which you might do this. (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**.)

“For” at the start of a verse introducing a reason

Several times in this chapter, Elihu says “For” at the beginning of a verse to introduce the reason for something he said in the previous verse. Elihu does this in verses 3, 5, 9, 11, 21, and 37. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could refer back more explicitly to the previous verse in order to show what Elihu is doing. The UST models ways to do this in each case. (“For” at the beginning of verse 23 introduces a new consideration, as the UST also illustrates.) (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**.)

Job 34:1

And Elihu answered and said

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **answered** tells for what purpose a person **said** something. In this case, Elihu said more things in light of what he had already said and thus, in a sense, in answer to them. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use "and." Alternate translation: "And Elihu said further, in light of what he had already said" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 34:2

my words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he is about to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “what I have to say” (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

wise {ones

Elihu is using the adjective **wise** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. (The ULT adds the word **ones** to show this.) Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “you who are wise” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 34:3

the ear tests words, and the palate tastes food

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, Elihu is using the same phrase that Job used to tell his friends in [12:11](#) that he had considered and rejected their perspective. Elihu is quoting Job in order to tell him that, for his part, he has considered Job's perspective and rejected it. To help your readers recognize this, you may wish to use the same language in your translation here as you did in [12:11](#). (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

the ear tests words, and the palate tastes food

Elihu is using the word **and** to indicate that the phrase it introduces is just as true as the previous phrase. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "the ear tests words, just as the palate tastes food" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

the ear tests words, and the palate tastes food

Elihu is speaking of the **ear** as if it could **test words** by itself. He is using the ear to represent hearing, and he means that people themselves test or consider the words of others when they hear them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "people consider others' words when they hear them, just as people discern with their mouths the taste of their food" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the ear tests words, and the palate tastes food

Though Elihu is making a general statement, he is referring implicitly to what Job has said and what he has decided about it. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "I have heard what Job has said and I have considered it and decided that it is not true, just as people discern with their mouths the taste of their food" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what people say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what people say" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and the palate tastes food

Elihu is speaking of the **palate** or mouth as if it could **taste** by itself. He means that with their mouths, people discern the taste of the food that they eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "just as people discern with their mouths the taste of their food" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 34:4

Let us choose justice for ourselves; let us know among ourselves what is good

Elihu is using the pronoun **us** to refer to himself and to the “wise ones” whom he is addressing, so use the inclusive form of that word if your language marks that distinction. (Even though Job is present and listening, Elihu is not addressing him, so Elihu is still saying **us** to include everyone whom he actually is addressing.) (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.1181)**)

justice

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **justice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “what is just” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 34:5

For Job has said, 'I am righteous, but God has taken away my justice

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "For Job has said that he is righteous but that God has taken away his justice" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

but God has taken away my justice

Elihu is saying that Job has spoken of **justice** as if it were an object that God had **taken away** from him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but God has not been just in the way that he has treated me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 34:6

Would I lie about my justice? My arrow is incurable, without transgression

If you decided in the previous verse to translate this quotation in such a way that there would not be a quotation within a quotation, you can continue doing that here. Alternate translation: "Job has said that he would not lie about his justice and that his arrow is incurable, without transgression" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Would I lie about my justice

In this quotation by Elihu, Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I would not lie about my justice!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Would I lie about my justice

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **justice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "I would not lie about whether I had done the right thing!" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

My arrow

In this quotation by Elihu, Job is using the term **arrow** by association to mean a wound from an arrow. (Elihu is referring back to what Job said in 16:13 about God's archers fatally wounding him with arrows.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "My wound" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

without transgression

In this quotation by Elihu, Job is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "even though I am without transgression" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 34:7

What man {is} like Job

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "There is no other person like Job!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

He drinks scorn like water

Elihu is speaking as if Job literally drank **scorn** the way he would drink **water**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He indulges freely in making scornful statements" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 34:8

doers of iniquity & men of wickedness

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **iniquity** and **wickedness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: “people who do what is iniquitous ... people who are wicked” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 34:9

For he has said, 'It does not benefit a man when he delights {himself} with God

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "For he has said that it does not benefit a person when he delights himself with God" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Job 34:10

men of heart

Here the **heart** represents understanding. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “men of understanding” or “you wise men” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Sacrilege to God from wickedness, and the Almighty from iniquity

See how you translated the expression “Sacrilege to” in [27:5](#). Alternate translation: “Far be it from God to do wickedness, and from the Almighty to do iniquity” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Sacrilege to God from wickedness, and the Almighty from iniquity

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “Far be it from God to do wickedness, and far be it from the Almighty to do iniquity” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 34:11

he repays & he causes it to find him

The pronoun **he** refers to God in both instances. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "God repays ... God causes it to find him" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the deed of a man he repays to him

See how you translated the word "repay" in [21:19](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God punishes a person for what he does" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and according to the path of a man

Elihu is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **path** that the person was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and based on how a person lives" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he causes it to find him

Here, **it** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "God causes things to happen to him" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 34:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 34:13

Who appointed {him} over the earth? And who set the world, all of it

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "God did not need anyone to appoint him over the earth or to set all of the world under his dominion!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

And who set the world, all of it

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "And who set the world, all of it, under his dominion" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 34:14

If he set his heart upon himself

Here the **heart** represents the thoughts and perceptions. Alternate translation: “If he considered only himself” or “If he thought only about himself” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

if} he gathered his Spirit and his breath to himself

As he did in [32](#), here Elihu is alluding to the way that God originally breathed the breath of life into humans. You could indicate that explicitly in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “if he withdrew his Spirit and the breath of life from humans” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 1143)**)

Job 34:15

all flesh

Elihu is using the term **flesh** by association to mean the creatures that God made, which generally have flesh. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “all creatures” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

would expire together

Elihu is using the word **expire** to mean “die.” This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “would pass away together” or “would die at the same time” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

and man would return to the dust

Elihu does not mean that people would actively **return** to the **dust** on their own. Rather, as in 33:6, he is referring to the way that God originally formed people from the dust of the earth, and he means that humans would die and their bodies would become dust again. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and people would die be buried and their bodies would decompose and become part of the dirt again” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 34:16

But if understanding

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “But if understanding is to you” or “But if you have understanding” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

hear & listen

The imperatives **hear** and **listen** are singular because Elihu is now addressing Job directly. (He is marking a transition from addressing the other “wise ones” who are present by repeating those two terms, which he also used in verse 2.) So use singular imperative forms in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

listen to the sound of my words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he is about to say by using words. As in [33:8](#), he may be referring to the **sound** of the words to mean the exact words, that is, exactly what he is going to say. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “listen to exactly what I am going to say” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 34:17

Will one hating justice indeed govern? Or if you will condemn the Righteous {One}, the Mighty {One}

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. (The second question continues into the next two verses, but in many languages it will not be necessary to translate those verses differently except for the punctuation at the end of verse 19.) Alternate translation: “One hating justice will certainly not govern! No, you should not condemn the Righteous One, the Mighty One” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Or if you will condemn the Righteous {One}, the Mighty {One}

Elihu is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If you decide to retain the question form, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “And you will not condemn the Righteous One, the Mighty One, will you” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the Righteous {One}, the Mighty {One}

Elihu is using the adjectives **Righteous** and **Mighty** as nouns to mean a certain person, God, who possesses these qualities supremely. The ULT adds the word **One** in each case to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “God, who is supremely righteous and mighty” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 34:18

the one saying 'Worthless!' to a king, Wicked!' {to} nobles

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "the one telling a king that he is worthless and telling nobles that they are wicked" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

to a king

Elihu is not referring to a specific **king**. He means kings in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "to kings" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 34:19

who does not lift the faces of princes

See how you translated the similar expression in [13:8](#). Alternate translation: “who does not show favoritism to princes” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

to the face of the poor

In this context, the phrase **to the face of** means “in front of” or “ahead of.” Alternate translation: “ahead of the poor” or “more than the poor” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the rich & the poor

Elihu is using the adjectives **rich** and **poor** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: “rich people ... poor people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

all of them {are} the work of his hands

Elihu is using one part of God, his **hands**, to mean all of him in the act of making people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he has made all of them” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

his hands

If you decided in verse 17 to use a statement or exclamation to translate the question that begins in the middle of that verse and continues to the end of this verse, remember to use the punctuation here that your language uses to mark the end of a statement or exclamation. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Job 34:20

and {in} the middle of the night

Elihu is speaking as if what he is describing generally happens to people literally **in the middle of the night**. He means that it happens suddenly and unexpectedly, as if it happened at the time when people are usually asleep. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and suddenly and unexpectedly” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

people are shaken

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “God shakes people” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and they pass

Elihu is using the word **pass** to mean “die.” This is a mild or poetic way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “and they depart” or “and they die” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

and they take away the mighty

Here, **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with a different expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: “and the mighty are taken away” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the mighty

Elihu is using the adjective **mighty** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “even the person who is mighty” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

not by a hand

Elihu is using one part of a human being, his **hand**, to mean all of him in the act of potentially taking away a mighty person (although Elihu says that no person actually does this). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “not by a human being” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 34:21

his eyes {& he sees

The first instance of the pronoun **his** and the pronoun **he** refer to God. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "God's eyes ... God sees" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

his eyes {are} upon

Elihu is using one part of God, his **eyes**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he looks upon" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the ways of a man, and & all of his steps

Elihu is speaking of how a person lives as if that were a **way** or path that the person was taking **steps** along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "how a person lives, and ... everything that he does" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 34:22

There is no darkness and there is no deep darkness

The terms **darkness** and **deep darkness** mean similar things. Elihu is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "There is no darkness at all" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

for the doers of iniquity to be hidden

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "for the doers of iniquity to hide themselves" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 34:23

he does not set upon a man

As Job does in [23:6](#), here Elihu is leaving out some of the words of a certain Hebrew expression that occurs in full form in other places in the book. See how you translated the expression “set upon” in [23:6](#). Alternate translation: “God does not set his heart upon a person” or “God does not consider a person” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

to go to God for judgment

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “so there is no need for any person to go to him for judgment” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 34:24

He shatters the mighty

Elihu is speaking as if God literally **shatters** mighty people or breaks them into pieces. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He punishes mighty people by taking away their power and influence" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the mighty

Elihu is using the adjective **mighty** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "mighty people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

with} no investigation

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **investigation**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "without needing to investigate how they have been living" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 34:25

he overthrows {them} & and they are crushed

Elihu is speaking as if God literally **overthrows** mighty people who do wrong, that is, as if God throws them down onto the ground. Elihu is also speaking as if God literally crushes these people, that is, breaks them into small pieces. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he takes away their power and influence ... and they are destroyed” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

in the night

See how you translated the similar phrase “in the middle of the night” in verse 20. Alternate translation: “suddenly and unexpectedly” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and they are crushed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and he crushes them” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 34:26

their wickednesses

Elihu is using a plural form to indicate that these mighty people whom God judges are guilty of wickedness to a great degree. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: “their great wickedness” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 34:27

they turned from after him

Elihu is speaking as if these wicked mighty people were literally walking behind God but then **turned** away to walk in a different direction from his. He means that they stopped obeying God's commandments. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they stopped obeying God's commandments" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and they did not consider any of his ways

Elihu is speaking of how God wants people to live as if that were a series of **ways** or paths along which God wants people to walk. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and they did not respect the manner in which God wants people to live" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 34:28

to cause the cry of the poor to come to him

In the first part of this verse, Elihu is indicating the result of what he described in the previous verse, wicked people not obeying God's commandments or respecting the way God wants people to live. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this explicitly in your translation. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here.

Alternate translation: "As a result, they caused the cry of the poor to come to God" (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

the poor & the lowly

Elihu is using the adjectives **poor** and **afflicted** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "poor people ... afflicted people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the lowly

See how you translated the term **lowly** in [29:12](#). (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

he heard

Elihu is using the term **heard** in a specific sense to mean "answered." Alternate translation: "God answered" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 34:29

If he is silent, then who will condemn {him}? If he hides {his} face, then who will perceive him

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Even if God is silent, no one can condemn him. If God hides his face, no one can perceive him" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

his} face

Elihu is using one part of God, his **face**, to mean all of him in the act of hiding himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "himself" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Yet {he is} over a nation and over a man alike

Elihu is describing God as **over** or spatially above each **nation** and **man** (person) in order to indicate that God rules them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Yet he rules both individual nations and individual persons" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 34:30

from the reigning of a godless man

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “to protect a nation from the reigning of a godless man” or “to keep a godless person from reigning over a nation” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

from snares of the people

Elihu is speaking as if the **people** of a nation would literally be caught in **snares** or traps if a godless person became their ruler. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to keep people from being oppressed” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 34:31

If one says to God, I have borne, I will not offend

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "If one says to God that he has borne but he will no longer offend" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

If one says to God

Elihu is suggesting a hypothetical situation in order to illustrate a point. Alternate translation: "Suppose someone said to God" (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1204)**)

I have borne

The speaker in this hypothetical situation is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "I have borne punishment for my sin" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 34:32

besides [what] I see, you teach me; if I have done iniquity, I will not continue

If you decided in the previous verse to translate this quotation in such a way that there would not be a quotation within a quotation, you can continue doing that here. Alternate translation: “if he asks God to teach him what he cannot see, and if he says that if he has done iniquity, he will not continue” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

besides [what] I see, you teach me; if I have done iniquity, I will not continue

This verse continues the hypothetical situation that Elihu is suggesting in order to illustrate a point. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “And suppose that person asked God to teach him what he could not see, and suppose he told God that if he had done iniquity, he would not continue.” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1204)**)

you teach me

For emphasis, Elihu is stating the pronoun **you**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **teach**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “please teach me” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 34:33

from with you will he repay it

Elihu is using the expression **from with you** to refer, while addressing Job, to the perspective that Job has been expressing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “will God still punish that repentant person, as you have been saying he would” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

from with you will he repay it

This is the end of the hypothetical situation that Elihu has been suggesting in order to illustrate a point. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “Then, in your opinion, would God still punish that person” (See: **Hypothetical Situations (p.1204)**)

will he repay it

See how you translated the word “repay” in verse 11. Alternate translation: “will he still punish the person for having done wrong” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

you despise

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “you belittle what we have been saying about how God deals with people” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 34:34

Men of heart

See how you translated the same expression in verse 10. Alternate translation: “Men of understanding” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and a man of wisdom

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **wisdom**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “and any wise person” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

hearing me

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “hearing me will also say to me” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 34:35

Job does not speak with knowledge, and his words {are} not with understanding

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation, with no comma at the end of verse 34: “that Job does not speak with knowledge and that his words are without understanding” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

with knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “knowledgeably” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and his words {are} not with understanding

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and what he says is not with understanding” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and his words {are} not with understanding

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **understanding**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “and he does not really understand what he is talking about” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 34:36

Job were tested

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God would test Job" or "God would put Job on trial" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

upon {his} answers among men of iniquity

Elihu is using the word **among** in a sense that suggests that one thing is associated with another. He means that Job responds in a way associated with **men of iniquity**, as if Job were such a person himself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "because he answers as men of iniquity would" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 34:37

he claps

As in [27:23](#), here clapping one's hands is a symbolic action that expresses derision. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate that explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: "he claps his hands derisively" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

and he multiplies his words against God

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he says more and more things against God" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 35

Job 35 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Elihu's speech. In this chapter, Elihu speaks primarily to Job, although in the last verse he speaks about Job to the others who are present.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Does God not benefit when humans do what is right?

In verses 6–8, Elihu tells Job that whether he is good or bad has no effect on God; that only affects other people. Elihu probably means that God does not owe Job anything for being good and that God does not have to defend himself against Job being bad. But if what Elihu says is taken in a general sense, then it does not express the full teaching of the Bible. Elsewhere the Bible says that God is delighted when people obey him and that God grieves when people sin, knowing the destructive effects that this will have. God is glorified when people acknowledge that humans flourish when they obey his commandments. Elihu, like Job's friends, says things that are true to a certain extent but that do not fully express the counsel of God as found in the Bible as a whole.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

reference of "you" and "your"

Throughout this chapter, Elihu uses the pronouns "you" and "your" to address Job individually, so use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. In verse 3, in the quotation by Elihu, the pronoun "you" is also singular because Job is using it to address God.

Job 35:1

And Elihu answered and said

See how you translated the same expression in [34:1](#). Alternate translation: “And Elihu said further, in light of what he had already said” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 35:2

Do you consider this to {be} justice

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “You should not consider this to be justice!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Do you consider this to {be} justice

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the word **you** is singular here and throughout the chapter because Elihu is addressing Job directly. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

Do you consider this to {be} justice

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **justice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “You should not consider this a just thing to say!” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

You say, ‘I am more righteous than God

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “You say that you are more righteous than God” or, since this is not a direct quote from Job, “You speak as if you are more righteous than God” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Job 35:3

For

Elihu is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said in the previous verse that Job claimed to be more righteous than God. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I say that because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

you have said, 'What does it benefit you? What do I gain more than my sin

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "you have said to God, 'What does it benefit you if I am righteous? What more do I gain by not sinning than if I do sin?'" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

you have said, 'What does it benefit you? What do I gain more than my sin

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "you have asked God what it benefits him if you do not sin and what more you gain by not sinning than if you do sin" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

What does it benefit you? What do I gain more than my sin

In this quotation by Elihu, Job is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "It does not benefit you if I do not sin! I do not gain more by not sinning than if I do sin!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

What does it benefit you

The word **you** is singular here because in this quotation by Elihu, Job is addressing God directly. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

more than my sin

In this quotation by Elihu, Job is using the term **sin** by association to mean the act of sinning. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "more than if I had sinned" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 35:4

I will answer you {with} words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he is going to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will speak in reply to you" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

I

For emphasis, Elihu is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **answer**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of showing this emphasis. Alternate translation: "I myself" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and your friends with you

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and I will answer your friends with you" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 35:5

Observe the heavens and see

The terms **Observe** and **see** mean similar things. Elihu is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "Carefully observe the heavens" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

the clouds soar above you

Elihu is saying implicitly that God is even higher above Job than the **heavens** and the **clouds**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "the clouds soar above you; God is even greater than that!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 35:6

If you sin, what do you accomplish against him? Or {if} your transgressions multiply, what do you do to him

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "If you sin, you do not accomplish anything against God. If your transgressions multiply, you do not do anything to him." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Or {if} your transgressions multiply

Elihu is speaking of Job's supposed **transgressions** as if they were living things that could **multiply** on their own. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Or if you commit many transgressions" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 35:7

If you are righteous, what do you give to him, or what does he receive from your hand

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "If you are righteous, you do not give anything to God; he does not receive anything from your hand!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

from your hand

Elihu is using one part of Job, his **hand**, to mean all of him in the act of potentially giving something to God. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "from you" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 35:8

and & is} to a son of man

See how you translated the expression "son of man" in [16:21](#). Alternate translation: "and ... is to a human being"
(See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 35:9

From the multitude of oppressions

Elihu is using the plural form **oppressions** in a context where the singular term “oppression” would suffice. This suggests that he is using the plural form for emphasis. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “Because of great oppression” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

they make a cry

The pronoun **they** refers to people generally. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “people cry out for justice” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

from the arm of

Here, **arm** represents power, and in this context, the term indicates that **mighty** people are using their power to hurt others. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “because of the violence of” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the mighty

Elihu is using the adjective **mighty** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “mighty people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 35:10

But one does not say, 'Where is God my Maker, the one giving songs in the night

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "But one does not ask where God his Maker is, the one giving songs in the night" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Where is God my Maker

The expression **Where is** indicates a desire to know whether God will act. For example, in [2 Kings 2:14](#), Elisha asks, "Where is Yahweh, the God of Elijah?" as he strikes the Jordan River with Elijah's coat in order to part its waters so that he can walk across the riverbed. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate the question as the expression of a wish. Alternate translation: "I wish that God my Maker would act on my behalf" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the one giving songs in the night

Here, **night** represents difficult circumstances, and **songs** represent the rejoicing of a person whom God has delivered. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the one delivering people from difficult circumstances" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 35:11

the one teaching us more than the beasts of the earth, making us wiser than the birds of the heavens

If you decided in the previous verse to translate this quotation in such a way that there would not be a quotation within a quotation, you can continue doing that here. Alternate translation: “the one teaching people more than the beasts of the earth, making them wiser than the birds of the heavens.” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

the one teaching us more than the beasts of the earth, making us wiser than the birds of the heavens

In this quotation, the speaker describes **beasts** and **birds** as if they were living things that God could teach and make wise. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the one who gave us more understanding than the beasts of the earth and the birds of the heavens” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the one teaching us & making us wiser

The speaker is using the pronoun **us** to mean people and thus to refer to himself and his listeners, so use the inclusive form of that word if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive 'We' (p.1181)**)

Job 35:12

There

Elihu is speaking as if the troubles that people experience were a place that they were in. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "In their troubles," (See: **Metaphor (p. 1238)**)

but he does not answer from the face of the pride of evil {ones

Here the word **face** represents the presence of something by association with the way that people can see the face of someone who is present. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but he does not answer, since pride is present in those evil ones" or "but he does not answer, since those evil ones are so proud" (See: **Idiom (p. 1207)**)

evil {ones

Elihu is using the adjective **evil** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. The ULT adds the word **ones** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "evil people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p. 1246)**)

Job 35:13

God does not hear vanity

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **vanity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Here the word **vanity** describes a cry to God for help that is insincere. The person asking for God's help has not repented of the sins that have gotten him into trouble; he is still doing "evil," as verse 12 indicates. Alternate translation: "God does not hear an insincere prayer for help" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

God does not hear vanity

Elihu is using the term **hear** in a specific sense to mean "answer." Alternate translation: "God will not answer an insincere prayer for help" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and the Almighty does not regard it

In this context, the word **regard** also means "answer." Elihu is using both hearing and seeing in parallel statements to emphasize his point. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. (You could also combine both parts of this verse into a single statement, as the UST does.) Alternate translation: "no, the Almighty will not answer such a prayer" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

Job 35:14

How much less that

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "How much less will God answer your prayers, given that" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

you say you do not see him, the case {is} to his face, and you are waiting for him

It may be more natural in your language to have a direct quotation here. Alternate translation: "you say, 'I do not see him; the case is to his face, and I am waiting for him,'" (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1167)**)

the case {is} to his face

In this context, the phrase **to his face** means "in front of him." This is likely a reference to the written documents that people in this culture prepared for legal proceedings, as a note to [31:35](#) discusses. Job would be saying that his testimony was "in front of" God, that is, he had submitted it for God to read. Alternate translation: "you have submitted your case to him" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 35:15

and now that {in} his nose, he does not visit, and he does not take much notice of transgression

If you decided in the previous verse to translate the beginning of this indirect quotation as a direct quotation, you can also translate the continuation of the indirect quotation here as a direct quotation. Alternate translation: “and also, ‘In his anger, he does not visit, and he does not take much notice of transgression!’” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

he does not visit

As Job did in [31:14](#), here Elihu is using the term **visit** in a particular sense. When applied to God, the term often indicates that God takes action in the life of a person or group, whether to help needy people or to punish guilty people. Here it has the latter sense. Alternate translation: “God does not punish people who are guilty of committing sin” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 35:16

So Job opens his mouth

Elihu is using the first part of the speaking process, opening one's **mouth**, to mean the entire process of speaking. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "So Job speaks" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

without knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation, as in the UST: "without knowing what he is talking about" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

he multiplies words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he says many things" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 36

Job 36 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Elihu's speech. In this chapter, Elihu speaks primarily to Job, although others are present and listening.

- Verses 1–21: Elihu says that God uses suffering to warn and correct people.
- Verses 22–23: Elihu describes how great God is, using a storm that is gathering and approaching to describe God's great power.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

The difficulty of understanding verses 17–21

Verses 17–21 are very difficult to understand. Biblical scholars have offered a variety of explanations of what Elihu says in each verse. Published versions of the Bible differ significantly from one another in their renderings of this material. The ULT seeks to offer a consistent and reasonable translation of these verses. But if a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may find that it differs from the ULT in several places in the way that it translates these verses. If there is a Bible translation in your region, you may wish to use the readings that it uses. If not, you may wish to follow the readings of ULT.

singular “you” and “your”

The pronouns “you” and “your” and the implied “you” in imperative verbs are singular throughout this chapter because Elihu is addressing Job. If your language marks a distinction between singular and plural “you,” use singular forms in your translation.

“hear” meaning “obey”

In verses 10, 11, and 12, Elihu uses the term “hear” in a specific sense to mean “obey.” You may wish to use the term “obey” in each instance in your translation.

Job 36:1

And Elihu continued and said

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **continued** tells for what purpose a person **said** something. Specifically, the person said it to add more to what he had already said. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “And Elihu said further” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 36:2

Be patient & and I will show you

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the word **you** and the implied “you” in the imperative **Be patient** are singular here because in this chapter, Elihu is addressing Job directly. So if your language marks a distinction between singular and plural “you,” use the singular form in your translation here and throughout the chapter. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

and I will show you

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and I will show you that God has not been punishing you unfairly” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

there are} yet words to God

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he wants to say further by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “there are more things to say on behalf of God” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 36:3

I will carry my knowledge to from afar

Elihu is describing places that are **afar** off from the perspective of how far a person would have to travel to come from those places. That is why he speaks of the places as being **from afar** and why he speaks of going to those places as going **to from afar**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will carry my knowledge to distant places" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

I will carry my knowledge to from afar

Elihu is speaking as if his **knowledge** were an object that he could literally **carry** to distant places. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: "I will show a wide knowledge of my subject" or "I will speak with comprehensive knowledge" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

I will carry my knowledge to from afar

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "I will show that I know a wide range of things" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and I will attribute righteousness to my Maker

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **righteousness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and I will show that my Maker is righteous" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and & to my Maker

By **my Maker**, Elihu implicitly means God, who made him. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and ... to God, who made me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 36:4

my words

Elihu is using the term **words** to mean what he is about to say by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "what I say" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the complete in knowledge {is} with you

Elihu is using the adjective phrase **complete in knowledge** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjective phrases in the same way. If not, you can translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "someone who has complete knowledge is with you" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the complete in knowledge {is} with you

Elihu says **complete** here as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: ""someone who has very comprehensive knowledge is with you" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

the complete in knowledge {is} with you

Elihu is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "I who have very comprehensive knowledge am with you" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Job 36:5

and he does not despise

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. He is probably responding to what Job said to God in [10:3](#), “you ... despise the work of your hands.” If that would be clearer in your language, you can supply these words from the context, specifically from verse 2, where Elihu speaks of God as his “Maker.” Alternate translation: “and he does not despise any of the people whom he has made” (See: [Ellipsis \(p.1174\)](#))

mighty, strong in heart

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “he is also mighty in that he is strong in heart” (See: [Ellipsis \(p.1174\)](#))

mighty, strong in heart

Here the **heart** represents the mind or understanding. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he is also mighty in that he has great understanding” (See: [Metaphor \(p.1238\)](#))

Job 36:6

He does not keep the wicked alive

Elihu is expressing a positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of his intended meaning. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He punishes the wicked by killing them" (See: **Litotes (p.1232)**)

the wicked & the lowly

Elihu is using the adjectives **wicked** and **lowly** as nouns to mean certain kinds of people. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "wicked people ... lowly people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

but he gives the lowly justice

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **justice**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "but he makes sure that others treat lowly people fairly" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the lowly

See how you translated the term **lowly** in [29:12](#). (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 36:7

He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous

Elihu is expressing a positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of his intended meaning. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He keeps his eyes on the righteous" (See: **Litotes (p.1232)**)

He does not withdraw his eyes from the righteous

Elihu is using one part of God, his **eyes**, to mean all of him in the act of watching over the righteous. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He continually watches over the righteous" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

from the righteous

Elihu is using the adjective **righteous** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "from the person who is righteous" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

from the righteous

Elihu is not referring to a specific **righteous** person. He means righteous people in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form, particularly since Elihu uses plural forms in the rest of this verse. Alternate translation: "from righteous people" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

but he sets them on a throne with kings

Elihu is speaking as if God literally put **righteous** people on a **throne** together with **kings**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "but he gives them positions of power and influence" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and they rise high

Elihu is speaking as if righteous people literally **rise high** when God helps them. He is speaking of the esteem in which others come to hold them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and others esteem them greatly" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 36:8

But if {they are} bound in chains and they are caught in cords of affliction

The phrase **bound in chains** could mean: (1) the same thing as **caught in cords of affliction**. Elihu may be using repetition to emphasize the idea that these phrases express. In that case, he would be speaking in both phrases as if righteous people were literally **bound** or **caught** by affliction in order to say that they were suffering from affliction. Alternate translation: "If they are bound in chains of affliction; yes, if they are caught in cords of affliction" (2) being bound in actual **chains**. This would mean that people who had previously been righteous had unfortunately committed some crime and had been punished with imprisonment. In that case Elihu would be using **chains** in the first part of the verse to mean actual physical restraint and **cords** in the second part of the verse to represent sufferings. Alternate translation: "But if they are put in prison for some crime or if they are suffering from affliction" (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

they are} bound in chains and they are caught in cords of affliction

If your language does not use these passive forms, you could express the ideas in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "chains are binding them and cords of affliction have caught them" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 36:9

their deeds and their transgressions

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **transgressions** tells what kind of **deeds** these people did. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “their evil deeds” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

for they magnified themselves

Elihu is using the word **for** to introduce the reason why these people committed **deeds** that were **transgressions**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “which they did because they became proud” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

Job 36:10

and he opens their ear to correction

Elihu is using one part of these righteous people who unfortunately have sinned, their **ear**, to mean all of them in the act of hearing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he enables them to hear correction” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and he opens their ear to correction

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, in this context, to hear means to obey. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he enables them to obey correction” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and he opens their ear to correction

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **correction**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “and he enables them to obey him when he corrects them” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

their ear

If you retain the use of the term **ear** for the whole person in your translation, since Elihu is speaking of many people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **ear**. Alternate translation: “their ears” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

and says that they shall return from iniquity

It may be more natural in your language to have a direct quotation here. Alternate translation: “and says, ‘You shall return from iniquity!’” (See: **Direct and Indirect Quotations (p.1167)**)

and says that they shall return from iniquity

In this quotation by Elihu, God is using a future statement to give a command. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate these words using a command form. Alternate translation: “and says, ‘You must return from iniquity!’” (See: **Statements — Other Uses (p.1290)**)

and says that they shall return from iniquity

In this quotation by Elihu, God is speaking as if **iniquity** were a place from which disobedient people had to **return**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and says, ‘You must stop committing iniquity!’” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and says that they shall return from iniquity

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **iniquity**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “and says, ‘You must stop doing things that are iniquitous!’” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 36:11

they hear

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, Elihu is using the term **hear** in a specific sense to mean “obey.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly, here and in the next two verses. Alternate translation: “they obey” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

they will complete their days in good and their years in pleasantness

Elihu is using the terms **days** and **years** to refer to a specific time, the lifetimes of these repentant people. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they will complete their lifetimes in good; yes, they will have pleasantness for the rest of their lifetimes” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

they will complete their days in good and their years in pleasantness

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **good** and **pleasantness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: “they will enjoy good things and be in pleasant situations for the rest of their lifetimes” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 36:12

they will cross over by a weapon

See how you translated the similar expression in [33:18](#). Alternate translation: “someone will kill them with a weapon” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

and they will expire

Elihu is using the word **expire** to mean “die.” This is a mild way of referring to death. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “and they will pass away” or “and they will die” (See: **Euphemism (p.1177)**)

as without knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “because they acted as if they did not know how God wanted them to live” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 36:13

And the godless of heart

Elihu is using the adjective phrase **godless of heart** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjective phrases in the same way. If not, you can translate this with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "And people who are godless in their hearts" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

And the godless of heart

Here the **heart** represents the character of a person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And people whose character is godless" or "And people of godless character" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

keep the nose

Elihu is speaking as if anger, represented here by a part of the body, the **nose**, were an object that people could **keep**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "remain angry with God" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

he binds them

Elihu is speaking as if God literally **binds** disobedient people. He is using the same image as in verse 8 to mean that God afflicts them in order to correct them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he afflicts them" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 36:14

Their soul dies in youth, and their life {is} among the cultic prostitutes

You may find it more natural to put the information about what happens during the **life** of these disobedient people before the information about when they die. Alternate translation: "They live among the cultic prostitutes, and they die young" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

Their soul dies in youth

Elihu is using one part of these disobedient people, their **soul**, to mean all of them in the act of dying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "They die in youth" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Their soul dies

If you retain the use of the term **soul** for the whole person in your translation, since Elihu is speaking of many people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **soul**. Alternate translation: "Their souls die" (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

in youth

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **youth**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "while they are still young" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and their life {is} among the cultic prostitutes

Elihu is using the **life** of these people to mean all of them in the act of living. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and they live among the cultic prostitutes" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and their life {is} among the cultic prostitutes

Elihu means implicitly that these disobedient people are reduced to making their living as **cultic prostitutes**, that is, as people who perform sexual acts in connection with religious rites. (Your language may have a discreet expression for this kind of activity that you may wish to use in your translation. The UST models one way to do that.) Alternate translation: "and they are reduced to making a living as cultic prostitutes" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 36:15

He delivers the afflicted by his affliction

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **affliction**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “God uses the things that afflict a person to deliver that person” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the afflicted

Elihu is using the adjective **afflicted** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “an afflicted person” or “someone who is suffering from affliction” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and he opens their ear by oppression

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **oppression**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “and he uses the things that oppress people to open their ear” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

and he opens their ear

See how you translated the similar expression in [36:10](#). Alternate translation: “and he leads them to obey” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

their ear

If you retain the use of the term **ear** for the whole person in your translation, since Elihu is speaking of many people, it may be more natural in your language to use the plural form of **ear**. Alternate translation: “their ears” (See: **Collective Nouns (p.1152)**)

Job 36:16

he has drawn you & he has filled

Elihu is using the past tense in order to refer to something that he believes God would have done if Job had repented (if Job had actually been guilty of sin). Alternate translation: “he would have drawn you ... he would have filled” (See: **Predictive Past (p.1265)**)

he has drawn you from the mouth of distress

Elihu is speaking of **distress** as if it were a living thing that had Job in its **mouth** and was about to swallow him. Your language may have a similar expression that you can use in your translation. You could also use plain language. Alternate translation: “he would have snatched you from the jaws of distress and brought you” or “he would have rescued you from the distress that you were in and brought you” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

to} a broad place {with} no constriction under it

These two expressions mean the same thing. Elihu is using them together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “to a place where you have plenty of room” or “to a place where you would have had plenty of room” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

to} a broad place {with} no constriction under it

Elihu is speaking as if God literally would have brought Job to a **broad place**, that is, to an open square such as Job mentioned in 29:7. Elihu means that God would have brought Job into a situation in life where he had many opportunities and the means to pursue them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “into a situation where you had many opportunities and the means to pursue them” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

with} no constriction under it

Elihu is using the expression **under it** to describe what this place is like. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “with no constriction there” or “where there is no constriction” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and the setting of your table he has filled {with} fatness

Elihu is speaking of the **setting** of Job's **table**, that is, the food on his table, as if it were a container that God had filled with **fatness**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he has given you much rich food to eat” or “and he would have given you much rich food to eat” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 36:17

But you are full of the judgment of the wicked

For emphasis, Elihu is speaking as if Job were a container that was **full of judgment**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in another way. Elihu could mean: (1) that Job is like the godless people he described in verse 13, who remain angry with God because they judge that God is punishing them unfairly. Alternate translation: "But you are judging God very unfairly, as the wicked do" (2) that Job is experiencing the consequences of God's judgment against him. Alternate translation: "but God is judging you severely, as he judges the wicked" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the wicked

Elihu is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "wicked people" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

judgment and justice take hold

The terms **judgment** and **justice** mean similar things. Elihu is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "strict justice takes hold" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

judgment and justice take hold

Elihu is speaking of these **judgment** and **justice** as if they were living things that could **take hold** of someone or something. He could mean: (1) that God is executing judgment against Job by punishing him. In that case, Elihu would be using **judgment** in a different sense than he did in the first part of the verse, to mean God's judgment of Job rather than Job's judgment of God. Alternate translation: "God is judging you strictly by punishing you" (2) that **judgment** and **justice** take hold of one another, meaning that they work together closely to show that Job is guilty. Alternate translation: "a just judgment is that you are guilty" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 36:18

For wrath, lest it entice you

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “For there is wrath, so beware lest it entice you” or “For you are angry, so beware lest your anger entice you” (See: **Ellipsis (p. 1174)**)

into clapping

Elihu is using the term **clapping** by association to mean derision, since the people in this culture clapped their hands in order to express derision, as [27:23](#) and [34:37](#) indicate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “into mocking God” (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

and the greatness of a ransom will not deliver you

It may be more natural in your language to express the meaning here by using a form other than a possessive form. Alternate translation: “and no ransom, no matter how great, will deliver you” (See: **Possession (p. 1261)**)

Job 36:19

Will he esteem your riches

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “God would not esteem your riches!” or “God would not want your money so much that he will accept a bribe and not punish you.” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Not gold or all of the strengths of wealth

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “No, God would not esteem gold or all of the strengths of wealth!” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

or all of the strengths of wealth

Elihu is speaking of **wealth** as if it were a living thing that had **strengths**. He is using the idea of strength to refer to an amount or quantity of wealth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “or any other kind of wealth, no matter how much of it there might be” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 36:20

the night

Elihu is probably using the image of **night** to mean death, similarly to the way Bildad used “darkness” to mean death in [18:18](#). If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “death” or “to die” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

which is} to the departing of peoples {from} their place

By **their place**, Elihu seems to mean this earth. This may be an implicit warning to Job that once he dies, he will no longer have the opportunity that people on this earth have to repent and be reconciled to God. Alternate translation: “because when people die, they leave this earth and they have no further opportunity to repent” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 36:21

do not turn to sin

Elihu is speaking as if **sin** were in a particular direction and Job might literally **turn** towards that direction. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “do not commit sin” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

rather than affliction

Elihu is using the term **affliction** by association to mean God’s correction. (Elihu said in verses 8–10 and 15 that God used affliction to correct people.) If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “rather than accepting the correction that God is bringing to you through affliction” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 36:22

Behold, God causes to be high in his power

This could mean, depending on the meaning of the rest of the sentence: (1) that Elihu is beginning his description of a gathering storm and he is calling the attention of the others who are present to the clouds that are forming in the sky. In that case, Elihu would mean the term **Behold** literally. Alternate translation: "Look, God causes to be high in his power!" (2) that while Elihu is going to use the storm to illustrate God's power, here he is asking the others to reflect on how great God's power is. Alternate translation: "Consider this: God causes to be high in his power" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Behold, God causes to be high in his power

Elihu could be saying: (1) that God makes **high** things, specifically in this case storm clouds, and that demonstrates his **power**. Alternate translation: "Look at what high clouds God is making in his power!" (2) that God has caused himself to be high, that is, that God has exalted himself. Alternate translation: "Consider how great God has shown himself to be" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Who {is} a teacher like him

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "No one is a teacher like him!" or "He is about to teach us something in a way that no one else could." (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Job 36:23

Who has appointed his way to him? Or who has said, 'You have committed unrighteousness

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "No one has appointed his way to him! And no one has told him, 'You have committed unrighteousness!'" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Who has appointed his way to him

Elihu is speaking of how someone conducts himself as if that were a **way** or path that the person was walking along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Who has told him how to live" or "No one has told him how to live!" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Or who has said, 'You have committed unrighteousness

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "Or who has told him that he has committed unrighteousness" or "And no one has told him that he has committed unrighteousness!" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Or who has said, 'You have committed unrighteousness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **unrighteousness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "Or who has told him that he has done what is not right" or "And no one has told him that he has done what is not right!" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 36:24

Remember

Elihu is using the term **Remember** in a particular sense to mean “ensure.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Ensure” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

men

Here the masculine term **men** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 36:25

Every man has looked upon it; man has regarded from afar

Elihu could possibly be indicating the storm that is gathering. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Everyone can see the storm clouds that God is forming in the sky, even though they are so high up and far away” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Every man & man has regarded

Here again the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women.

Alternate translation: “Each person ... people have regarded” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

man has regarded from afar

Elihu is speaking as if people have literally seen God’s work **from afar**, that is, from a distance. He probably means that people only see and understand God’s work indistinctly and without recognizing many specific details. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “however, people only understand God’s work indistinctly” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

man has regarded

Elihu is implying a slight contrast: While people can see God’s work, they can only see it **from afar**. In your translation, you may wish to indicate this contrast in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “however, man has only regarded” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

Job 36:26

the number of his years, indeed, {there is} no searching

Elihu may be using the term **years**, indicating age, by association to mean wisdom. The book makes this association in various other places, such as [12:12](#) and [32:7](#). If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he is extremely wise, since he is older than anyone can determine” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 36:27

For

Elihu is using the word **For** to introduce the immediate reason why he has been saying that God is powerful and wise. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “We can see how powerful and wise God is from the way that” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

he draws up the drops of water

Elihu is referring implicitly to the way God **draws up** water from the earth and sea as mist into the air. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “he makes drops of water rise into the air as mist” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

into his stream

Elihu is speaking as if the water that evaporates from the earth and sea literally forms a **stream** in the sky that supplies clouds with rainwater. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “into God’s supply” or “into the clouds” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 36:28

which the clouds pour down

The pronoun **which** refers to the “drops of water” that Elihu described in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “The clouds pour down these drops of water” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “humans” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 36:29

if one will understand the spread of the cloud, the thunder from his hut

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “no one can understand how God makes clouds spread or how he makes thunder come from his hut!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

from his hut

Elihu is speaking as if God literally lived in a **hut** in the sky. (He is using the same term that Job used in [27:18](#) to describe a guard booth.) If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “from his dwelling place in the sky” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 36:30

Behold

In this instance, Elihu seems to be using the term **Behold** literally. Alternate translation: “Look!” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

he spreads his lightning upon it

The pronoun **it** refers to God’s “hut,” that is, his dwelling in the sky, which Elihu described in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “he spreads his lightning upon his dwelling place in the sky” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he spreads his lightning upon it

Elihu is speaking as if God literally **spreads** lightning upon the sky. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “his lightning lights up the whole sky” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he covers the roots of the sea

Elihu is speaking of the depths of the sea as if they were the **roots** of the **sea**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he covers the depths of the sea” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he covers the roots of the sea

This could mean: (1) that God **covers** the depths of the sea with light. Alternate translation: “and the lightning is so bright that it even lights up the sea down to its depths” (2) that God **covers** the depths of the sea with water by refilling the sea with rainwater. Alternate translation: “and he refills the whole sea with rainwater” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and he covers the roots of the sea

Elihu says that lightning lights up the sea all the way down to its depths as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “and the lightning shines deep into the ocean” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 36:31

For

Elihu is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why the storms that God creates are so far-reaching in their effects, as he has just described. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “The storms that God creates are so far-reaching in their effects because” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

by them

The pronoun **them** refers either to the clouds that Elihu describes in verses 28 and 29 or to the thunder and lightning that he describes in verses 29 and 30. But either way, he is referring ultimately to thunderstorms such as the one whose formation he is narrating in this part of his speech. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “by such storms” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he judges the peoples

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly in your translation how God **judges the peoples** through the storms that he creates. Alternate translation: “he judges the peoples, sending lightning to punish those who disobey him but sending rain to bless those who obey him” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

he gives food in abundance

If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate explicitly in your translation how God **gives food in abundance** through the storms that he creates. Alternate translation: “the rain from these storms causes crops to grow in abundance” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 36:32

He covers over his hands {with} lightning

Elihu is using this expression to mean that God picks up so much lightning with his hands that his hands are no longer visible beneath it. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: "He fills his hands with lightning" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and he enjoins upon it against the mark

Elihu is speaking as if God literally gave a command to the lightning that it should hit a certain **mark**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and he makes it strike where he wishes" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 36:33

He declares his shout about it

Elihu is speaking as if thunder were a **shout** that God made. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God announces it with thunder" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He declares his shout about it

The pronoun **it** could refer to: (1) the storm in general. The second half of the verse suggests that this may be the case. Alternate translation: "God proclaims the coming storm with thunder" (2) the lightning Elihu describes in the previous verse. Alternate translation: "God proclaims the lightning with thunder" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the cattle also about the thing arising

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "the cattle also declare their shout about the thing arising" or "the cattle also make noise about the thing arising" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

about the thing arising

Elihu is using the phrase **the thing arising** to mean the coming storm by association with the way that its thunderclouds are rising up into the sky. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "about the coming storm" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 37

Job 37 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This is the conclusion of Elihu's speech. Elihu continues to use the storm that is gathering and approaching to describe God's great power. He concludes by telling Job that he should not expect to be able to speak with such a powerful God.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

singular "you" in verses 15–19

The pronoun "you" and the implied "you" in imperative verbs are singular in verses 15–19 because Elihu is addressing Job. If your language marks a distinction between singular and plural "you," use singular forms in your translation.

The nature of the questions in verses 15–18

Elihu asks Job a series of questions in verses 15–18. He may want Job to try to answer these questions so that Job will have to admit that he does not understand what God does. So these could be actual questions that Elihu is using to get information, specifically, these admissions from Job. Alternatively, Elihu may be using the question form for emphasis. A note to verse 15 suggests two possible ways in which you could translate the question there. Consider the most appropriate way to translate each of the questions in verses 15–18.

Job 37:1

my heart trembles at this, and it leaps from its place

Elihu is speaking as if his **heart** were literally trembling and leaping. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "at this, my heart pounds with emotion and skips a beat" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

at this

The pronoun **this** refers to the approaching storm. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "as this storm approaches" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 37:2

Hearing, hear

Elihu is repeating the verb **hear** in order to intensify the idea that it expresses. If your language can repeat words for intensification, it would be appropriate to do that here in your translation. If not, your language may have another way of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: "Oh, hear" (See: **Reduplication (p.1280)**)

hear

The implied "you" in the imperative **hear** is plural because Elihu is addressing Job, his three friends, and any others who may be present and listening. So use the plural form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of 'You' — Singular (p.1187)**)

the roar of his voice and the sound {that} comes from his mouth

These two phrases mean the same thing. Elihu is using them together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "how very loudly God is speaking" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

the roar of his voice and the sound {that} comes from his mouth

Elihu is speaking as if thunder were literally God's **voice**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this image as a comparison. Alternate translation: "this loud thunder! It is as if God is roaring" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 37:3

He lets it loose under all of the heavens, and his lightning to the edges of the earth

Elihu is speaking as if thunder and lightning were captive or restrained and God let them **loose** or released them. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God makes it thunder so loudly that it can be heard under the whole sky, and he makes the lightning flash so brightly that it can be seen everywhere on earth” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He lets it loose under all of the heavens, and his lightning to the edges of the earth

Elihu says that thunder can be heard everywhere under the sky and that lightning can be seen in the most distant places on earth as overstatements for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “God makes it thunder so loudly in the sky that people who are far away can hear it, and he makes the lightning flash so brightly that even people who are distant from where it strikes can see it” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

He lets it loose

The pronoun **it** refers to the thunder that Elihu described in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God lets the thunder loose” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

and his lightning

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and he lets his lightning loose” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

to the edges of the earth

People in this culture believed that the **earth** was a flat surface that had **edges**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could express the meaning here in terms of your own culture. Alternate translation: “all around the world” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 37:4

A voice roars

Elihu is speaking as if thunder were a **voice**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Thunder sounds loudly” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

after it

The pronoun **it** refers to a flash of lightning. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “after there is a flash of lightning” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he thunders with the voice of his majesty

Elihu is speaking as if thunder were God speaking. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this image as a comparison. Alternate translation: “when we hear thunder, it sounds as if God is speaking in his majesty” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and he does not restrain them

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **restrain**. (The pronoun **them** refers to bolts of lightning.) Alternate translation: “and he releases the lightning bolts” (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

when his voice is heard

Elihu is once again speaking as if thunder were God speaking. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “after thunder is heard” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

when his voice is heard

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “when we hear his voice” or “when we hear thunder” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 37:5

God thunders marvelously with his voice

Elihu is once again speaking as if thunder were God speaking. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “How marvelous thunder is! It is as if God himself is speaking” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and we do not know

Here the term **know** has the sense of “understand” rather than “be aware of.” Elihu is not saying that people do not realize that God is doing **great things**. He is saying that people are not able to understand or appreciate the great things they see God doing. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “that people cannot comprehend” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p. 1143)**)

Job 37:6

For

Elihu is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he said in the previous verse that God did things marvelously that people could not comprehend. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I say this because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

he says to the snow, 'Be {on} the earth,' and {to} the shower of rain, to} the shower of rains, 'Strength

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "he tells the snow to be on the earth and he tells the shower of rain, yes, the shower of rains, to be strong" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

he says to the snow, 'Be {on} the earth,' and {to} the shower of rain, to} the shower of rains, 'Strength

Elihu is speaking as if **snow** and **rain** were living things to which God spoke. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he makes snow fall on the earth and he makes the shower of rain, yes, the shower of rains, become strong" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and {to} the shower of rain

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and he says to the shower of rain" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

to} the shower of rains

Elihu is using the plural form **rains** for emphasis. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "to the heavy rain shower" (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Strength

In the quotation by Elihu, God is using the term **Strength** as a command. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Have strength" or "Be strong" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 37:7

He seals the hand of every man

Elihu is speaking as if God literally put a seal on every person's **hand** to restrict it from being used. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He restrains the hand of every man" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

He seals the hand of every man

Elihu is using one part of a person, his **hand**, to mean all of him in the act of working. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "He restrains every person from working" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

He seals the hand of every man

Elihu is referring implicitly to the way that a heavy downpour of rain prevents people from working in their fields. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "He sends heavy downpours that keep people from working in their fields" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

man for the knowing of all of men of his making

Here the masculine terms **man** and **men** have a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "person so that all the people whom he has made will know" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

for the knowing of all of men of his making

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. If it would be clearer in your language, you can indicate from the context what God wants people to be **knowing**. Alternate translation: "so that all the people whom he has made will appreciate the great things that he does" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 37:8

And the beast goes into {its} den and remains in its lairs

Elihu is not referring to a specific **beast**. He means beasts in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "And the beasts go into their dens and remain in their lairs" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and remains in its lairs

Elihu could be envisioning that a single **beast** would have several **lair**s, but he may be using the plural form for emphasis. Your language may also use plural forms for emphasis. If not, you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: "and remains safely in its lair" (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 37:9

from the chamber

As a note to [9:9](#) explains, people in this culture believed that God kept natural forces in “chambers” or storerooms and brought them out when he needed them. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “from the chamber where God keeps storms” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the cold from the north winds

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “and the cold comes from the north winds” or “and the north winds bring cold” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 37:10

From the breath of God ice is made

Elihu is speaking as if cold wind were the **breath of God**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "From the cold wind ice is made" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

From the breath of God ice is made

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "The breath of God makes ice" or "The cold wind makes ice" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and the breadth of the waters {is} in narrowness

While water actually expands when it freezes, Elihu probably means that when water freezes solid, it does not move around with the wind and so it remains within a smaller area. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and the waters freeze solid and stay in one place" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 37:11

Indeed

Elihu may be using the word translated **Indeed** to call the attention of Job and the others back to the gathering thunderstorm after talking about other things such as snow and ice. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Look!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the cloud & the cloud of his lightning

Elihu is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means clouds in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: "the clouds ... his lightning-clouds" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 37:12

And it is turning itself around

The pronoun **it** refers to the cloud that Elihu described in the previous verse. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and if you decided to use plural forms there, you can use a plural form here as well. Alternate translation: "And the clouds swirl around" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

above the face of the habitation of the earth

Elihu is using the term **face** in a specific sense to mean "surface." Alternate translation: "above the surface of the inhabited world" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 37:13

to the rod

Elihu is using the term **rod** by association to mean punishment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “to punish people” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

to his earth

Elihu seems to be referring implicitly to God taking care of the earth that he created. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “for the good of his earth” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

to kindness

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **kindness**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “in order to be kind to people” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

he causes it to find it

The pronoun **it** refers in its first instance to rain and in its second instance to the place where the rain falls or to the people on whom it falls. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “God causes the rain to find the right place” or “God causes the rain to find the right people” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

he causes it to find it

Elihu is speaking of rain as if it were a living thing that God abled to **find** the right location on which to fall. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “God makes it rain in the right place” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 37:14

Do hear this

Elihu is using an emphatic form of the imperative. If your language has an emphatic imperative, it would be appropriate to use it here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of expressing the emphasis. Alternate translation: “Pay close attention to this” (See: **Imperatives — Other Uses (p.1210)**)

stand and consider

Elihu is expressing a single idea by using the two verbs **stand** and **consider**. In this context, the word **stand** means not to do anything else. Elihu does not want Job to stand to his feet. Alternate translation: “only consider” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

the marvelous {things} of God

Elihu is using the term **marvelous** (which is a participle serving as an adjective) as a noun to mean things of a certain kind. The ULT adds the word **things** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this term with a different expression. Alternate translation: “the marvels that God does” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 37:15

Do you know of the placing of God upon them, and his cloud causes lightning to flash

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, this could mean: (1) that Elihu wants Job to try to answer this question and the following three questions so that Job will have to admit that he does not understand what God does. Alternate translation: “You do not know of the placing of God upon them, and his cloud causes lightning to flash, do you?” (2) that Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “Surely you do not know of the placing of God upon them, and his cloud causes lightning to flash!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Do you know

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, the word **you** is singular here and through verse 19 because Elihu is addressing Job directly. So use the singular form in your translation if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Singular (p.1187)**)

of the placing of God upon them

Elihu is using this possessive form to describe God **placing** a command on the clouds (that is, giving them an order), not to describe someone placing God or God placing himself on the clouds. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “how God gives orders to the clouds” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

and his cloud causes lightning to flash

Elihu is using the word **and** to introduce the result of God **placing** a command on the clouds. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “so that his cloud causes lightning to flash” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

and his cloud causes lightning to flash

Job is speaking of this **cloud** as if it were a living thing that could cause lightning to flash. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “so that lightning flashes from his cloud” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and his cloud causes lightning to flash

Elihu is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means clouds in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “and his clouds cause lightning to flash” or “so that lightning flashes from his clouds” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 37:16

Do you know about the balancing of the cloud, the wonders of the perfect in knowledges

See how you translated the question in the previous verse, either as a question that Elihu wanted Job to answer or one whose form Elihu was using for emphasis. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

about the balancing of the cloud

By **balancing**, Elihu seems to be referring to how clouds float in the sky. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “how God makes the cloud float in the sky” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

about the balancing of the cloud

Elihu is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means clouds in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation, as in the UST: “how God makes clouds float in the sky” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the wonders of the perfect in knowledges

Elihu is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation, following a semicolon: “do you know about the wonders of the perfect in knowledges” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

the perfect in knowledges

Elihu is using the adjective **perfect** as a noun to mean a certain person, God, whose knowledge is perfect, that is, complete and comprehensive. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “God, who is perfect in knowledges” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

the perfect in knowledges

Elihu is using the plural form **knowledges** in a context where the singular term “knowledge” would suffice. This suggests that he is using the plural form for emphasis. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, it might be natural for you to use a singular form, or you could express the emphasis in another way. Alternate translation: “God, who knows everything perfectly” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 37:17

You} whose garments {are} hot

Elihu is using one part of Job, his **clothes**, to mean all of him in the act of being **hot**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "You who sweat in your garments" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

in the quieting of the earth from the south

Elihu assumes that Job will understand that by **south** he is referring to the desert. The book of Job is set in a location where there was a desert to the south. You could indicate that explicitly in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "when the air comes from the desert and the land is still" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 37:18

will you hammer out the sky with him

People in this culture believed that the sky was a solid object, a great dome that God had made and placed above the earth. Elihu is speaking as if God had literally melted metal and then hammered it flat in order to make the sky. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Would you be able to create the sky as he did" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

as a cast mirror

A **mirror** is an object that reflects images. People look into mirrors to check their appearance. In this culture, mirrors were made of bright metal. If your readers would not be familiar with what a mirror is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable metal object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "as an object cast from metal" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

as a cast mirror

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "as a mirror that someone has cast from metal" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 37:19

Teach us what we shall say to him; we can not array, from the face of darkness

Elihu is using the term **us** to refer to himself and the others who are listening but not to Job, whom he is addressing, so use the exclusive form of “us” in your translation if your language marks that distinction. Elihu seems to be using the term **we** to refer to Job as well as to himself and the others who are listening, since he is describing a general human condition. It may be natural in your language to use the inclusive form of “we” in this second instance if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.1181)**)

Teach us what we shall say to him

For emphasis, Elihu is saying the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what Elihu actually means. Alternate translation: “I do not believe that you would be able to teach us what we should say to him” (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

we can not array

See how you translated the term “array” in [33:5](#). Alternate translation: “we cannot marshal our arguments” or “we cannot organize what we want to say” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

from the face of darkness

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person or thing by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: “because of the darkness that is present” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

from the face of darkness

Elihu is referring to the limitations of human understanding. He is speaking as if people were in **darkness** and so could not see or distinguish very much. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “because of the limitations of our human understanding” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 37:20

Shall it be recounted to him that I would speak

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "It should not be recounted to him that I would speak!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Shall it be recounted to him that I would speak

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Should someone recount to him that I would speak?" or "No one should recount to him that I would speak!" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

If a man spoke, that he would be swallowed up

Elihu is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "If a man spoke, surely he would be swallowed up!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

a man

Here the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "a person" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

he would be swallowed up

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "God would swallow him up" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

he would be swallowed up

Elihu is speaking as if God would literally **swallow** an insolent person. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "he would be destroyed" or "God would destroy him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 37:21

And now

Elihu is using the phrase **And now** to introduce an important point, the conclusion of his speech, that Job should not be asking to speak with God. Your language may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: “So then” (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

they do not look at

Here, **they** is an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with a different expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: “people do not look at” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

the bright light that {is} in the skies

Elihu is using a poetic expression to describe the sun. It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: “the sun” (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

and cleansed them

Elihu is speaking as if the **wind** literally **cleansed** the **skies** when it drove away all the clouds. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and driven away all the clouds” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 37:22

Out of the north

Elihu assumes that Job will understand that by **the north** he means the abode of God. In this culture, people believed that there was a divine residence in the northern regions of the earth. You could translate this with a general expression or with a term that your readers would recognize as describing the abode of God. Alternate translation: "From God's abode" or "From heaven" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

comes gold

Elihu is using the term **gold** by association to mean golden splendor, that is, the glory of God. He is actually speaking of God coming in glory. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "God comes in his glory" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

around God {is} awesome majesty

Elihu is drawing an implicit contrast between the brightness of the sun, which people cannot look at directly, and the infinitely greater brightness of God's glory. You may wish to make this contrast explicit in your translation. The UST models one way to do that. (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

Job 37:23

The Almighty, we do not find him

Job said in [23:3](#) that he wished he knew where to find God so that he could go to where God was. Here Elihu is implicitly responding to Job in his own words. You could indicate that explicitly in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “So, Job, none of us are able to find God and go where he is” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

The Almighty, we do not find him

Elihu is using the pronoun **we** to refer to himself and to Job, to whom he is speaking, so use the inclusive form of that word if your language marks that distinction. (See: **Exclusive and Inclusive ‘We’ (p.1181)**)

and he does not oppress justice and an abundance of righteousness

Elihu is expressing a positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of his intended meaning. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and he ensures that there is justice and an abundance of righteousness” (See: **Litotes (p.1232)**)

and he does not oppress justice and an abundance of righteousness

If your language does not use abstract nouns for the ideas of **justice** and **righteousness**, you could express the same ideas in other ways. Alternate translation: “and he is careful to treat people justly and to ensure that people everywhere do what is right” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 37:24

men

Here the masculine term **men** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: “all people” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

He does not regard any of the wise of heart

Elihu does not mean that God is not pleased when people become **wise**. He means that God would not show favoritism to a person who was particularly wise compared with other people, because compared with God's infinite wisdom, all people have only a little wisdom. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “He does not respect any person more than he respects other people, no matter how wise that person might be by human standards” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the wise of heart

As in [34:10](#), here the **heart** represents the understanding. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the wise in understanding” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

any of the wise of heart

Elihu is using the adjective **wise** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “any people who are wise of heart” or “any people who are able to understand things wisely” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 38

Job 38 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the beginning of Yahweh's response to Job. His response continues through chapter 41.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

In this chapter, Yahweh begins asking Job a series of questions in order to show that Job does not understand the workings of the created world. Yahweh asks questions about the earth in verses 4–20, with a summary challenge to Job in verse 21. Yahweh then asks questions about the sky in verses 22–38. He starts asking questions about animals and birds in verse 39; this part of his speech continues into the next chapter.

The implication is that if Job does not understand and cannot explain how God makes things work in the visible creation, he certainly does not understand and cannot explain what God is doing as he works in unseen, mysterious ways to accomplish his purposes in the lives of people and over the course of human history.

When God comes to Job in the storm and responds to his questions, it becomes obvious that Elihu was wrong to say that God would not meet with Job. This shows God's generosity to Job in granting him an interview as he requested, even though in the interview, God has to humble Job by demonstrating how little he actually knows.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Yahweh's description of the creation

In this chapter, Yahweh describes the earth, sea, and sky according to the way the people of Job's culture understood them. For example, in verse 16 Yahweh speaks of "springs" at the bottom of the sea that provide it with water. In verse 22, he speaks of "storehouses" in the sky where snow and hail are kept. In some parts of the chapter, these references occur within poetic images, such as the image in verses 4–6 of the earth as a building with "foundations" or the image in verses 12–13 of the dawn grasping the "edges" of the earth and shaking it. But in other places, the references do not occur within poetic images. In such places, Yahweh's questions to Job, which demonstrate the limits of Job's knowledge, depend for their force on these features being real, even though they do not correspond to the creation as we would describe it today. We may consider that Yahweh is using terminology that Job and the others who are listening would understand in order to communicate moral and spiritual insights to them. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate these descriptions of the natural world from an ancient perspective with equivalent expressions that use terms that reflect your own culture's perspective. Notes suggest how you might do this in various places. For example, a note to verse 16 suggests speaking of the "bottom of the sea" rather than of the "springs of the sea."

Translation Issues in This Chapter

The nature of the questions in verses 4–41

Yahweh asks Job a series of questions in verses 4–41. He may want Job to try to answer these questions so that Job will have to admit that he does not know the answers. So these could be actual questions that Yahweh is using to get information, specifically, the information from Job that he does not know the answers. Alternatively, Yahweh may be using the question form for emphasis. A note to verse 4 suggests two possible ways in which you could translate the question there. Consider the most appropriate way to translate each of the questions in this chapter.

Job 38:1

And Yahweh answered Job from the storm and said

The narrator is using the word translated **And** to introduce a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for making a transition from what has already been happening in a story and introducing a new event. Alternate translation: “And when the storm that Elihu had been watching and describing finally arrived where he and the others were, Yahweh answered Job from the storm and said” (See: **Introduction of a New Event (p.1215)**)

And Yahweh answered Job from the storm and said

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **answered** tells for what purpose a person **said** something. Specifically, the person said it in order to answer or respond to what someone else said. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “And from the storm Yahweh responded to Job” (See: **Hendiadys (p. 1193)**)

Job 38:2

Who {is} this, darkening counsel by words without knowledge

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis as he begins his reply to Job. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You have been darkening counsel by words without knowledge!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

darkening counsel

Yahweh is speaking as if Job had literally been making **counsel** (that is, proper understanding) darker. He means that Job has been making the truth harder to understand. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "obscuring proper understanding" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

by words

Yahweh is using the term **words** to mean what Job has been saying by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "by speaking" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

without knowledge

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **knowledge**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "without knowing what he is talking about" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 38:3

gird up your loins

Yahweh is speaking as if he literally wanted Job to **gird up** his **loins**, that is, to tuck the bottom of his robe into a belt so that he could move freely, as a soldier would do before going into battle. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “get ready for a difficult contest” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

like a man

Yahweh is using a particular word for **man** that can, in contexts such as this one, emphasize the strength and valor of a warrior. The point of this comparison is that Job should be brave, as a soldier must be when going into battle. Yahweh is not using the term **man** to suggest that men are strong and that women are weak. Alternate translation: “like a brave person” or “as a soldier would do when going into battle” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

and I will question you and you will inform me

Yahweh is answering Job with his own words. In [13:22](#), Job said to God (who was not visibly present at the time), “And call, and I will answer, or I will speak, and answer me.” Yahweh is telling Job that he will take the first option: He, Yahweh, will “call” (ask questions) and Job can respond. However, Yahweh says something slightly different than Job did. He says that Job can **inform** him. For emphasis, Yahweh is actually saying the opposite of what he means. He already knows everything, so he does not need Job to provide him with information that he lacks. If a speaker of your language would not say the opposite of what he means for emphasis, in your translation you could indicate what Yahweh actually means. Alternate translation: “and I will question you and you can tell me what you think I do not already know” (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

Job 38:4

Where were you in my founding of the earth

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, this could mean: (1) that Yahweh wants Job to try to answer this question and the questions in the rest of the chapter so that Job will have to admit that he does not know the answers. Alternate translation: "You were not there when I founded the earth, were you?" (2) that Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You were not there when I founded the earth!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

in my founding of the earth

Yahweh is speaking as if the earth were literally a building and he had **founded** it, that is, laid a foundation for it (made a solid base on which to build it). Since this is poetry, you may wish to retain the image in your translation, using construction terms from your own culture, even if a speaker of your language would not ordinarily describe the creation of the world in this way. Alternatively, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "when I cleared a space on which to build the earth" or "when I first started to create the earth" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Declare

Yahweh assumes that Job will understand that by **Declare** he means that he wants Job to declare how the foundations of the earth were laid. You could indicate that explicitly if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Explain how the foundations of the earth were laid" or "Explain how I first started to create the earth" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

if you know understanding

It might seem that the expression **know understanding** contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: "if you know" or "if you understand" (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

Job 38:5

Who set its measurements? & Or who stretched a line over it

See how you translated the question in the previous verse, either as a question that Yahweh wanted Job to answer or one whose form Yahweh was using for emphasis. Translate the rest of the questions in the chapter in the same way that you decided to translate that one. (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

If you know

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Tell me, if you know" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

who stretched a line over it

By **line**, Yahweh means a measuring line, a long cord or rope with a standard length marked off at regular intervals. He is speaking as if someone had literally stretched such a cord over the earth to make sure that its **measurements** were exactly the ones that he had **set**. If your readers would not be familiar with what a measuring line is, if you wish to retain the poetic image in your translation, you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture. Alternatively, you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "who measured it with a rod" or "who measured it to make sure that it had exactly the right dimensions" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 38:6

On what were its foundations sunk? Or who laid its cornerstone

Yahweh continues to speak as if the earth were literally a building. He here speaks as if he had **sunk** its **foundations** (that is, dug into the ground until he hit a solid surface on which to set them) and **laid its cornerstone**. As in verse 4, you may wish to retain the image in your translation, using construction terms from your own culture. Alternatively, you could use plain language. Alternate translation: "How did I make sure that the earth would stay in place? How did I make sure that it would be strong and stable" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:7

in the singing together of the stars of the morning, and all the sons of God shouted

It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. The phrase **the stars of the morning** could be describing: (1) the stars at the time of their original creation. In that case, Yahweh would be speaking of the stars as if they were living things that had sung a joyful song to celebrate the glory and beauty of the creation, including that of the earth. You could retain the image in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “When I made the earth, it was in beautiful harmony with the stars” (2) the angels, in parallel with the phrase **the sons of God** in the second half of the verse. Alternate translation: “When I made the earth, the angels sang a song of celebration” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and all the sons of God shouted

As in [1:6](#) and [2:1](#), the expression **sons of God** describes angelic beings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and all the angels shouted” or, if you translated **the stars of the morning** as “the angels” in the first half of the verse: “yes, all the angels shouted” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and & shouted

The term translated **shouted** implicitly means to shout for joy. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “and ... shouted for joy” or “and ... shouted joyfully” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 38:8

And {who} enclosed the sea with doors

Yahweh is speaking as if he had literally used **doors** to keep the sea from flowing onto the land. The image is that the sea is behind a wall or dam and that these doors can be opened for flood-control purposes but are ordinarily closed to contain the water. You could retain the image in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “And who held the sea back with floodgates” or “And who restrained the sea from flowing onto the land” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

with doors

The term **doors** is in the dual, here and in verse 10, so put the term in the dual form if your language uses that form. Other languages may have other ways of expressing the meaning. Alternate translation: “with double doors” (See: **Forms of ‘You’ — Dual/Plural (p.1185)**)

in its issuing from the womb, {when} it came out

It might seem that this expression contains extra information that would be unnatural to express in your language. If so, you can shorten it. Alternate translation: “when it came out of the womb” (See: **Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit (p.1234)**)

in its issuing from the womb, {when} it came out

Yahweh is speaking as if the sea had literally been born and come out of the **womb** of its mother. You could retain the image in your translation, or you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “when it was born” or “when I first made it a part of the creation” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:9

in my making the cloud its clothing and thick darkness its swaddling bands

Continuing the image of the sea being born when it was created, Yahweh is speaking as if he literally provided clouds as its **clothing** and **thick darkness** as its **swaddling bands** when it was first born. Within the context of this speech, this may be a reference to the way Yahweh has complete knowledge of and control over every element of creation. People in this culture regarded the sea as the realm of watery chaos; these images may be an assertion that God has always had the sea under his control and care. Alternate translation: “when I sheltered it and protected it as a mother would do for her newborn child” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

in my making the cloud its clothing

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means clouds in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “when I made the clouds its clothing” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and thick darkness its swaddling bands

The term **swaddling bands** describes the strips of cloth in which mothers in some cultures wrap their newborn babies to help them feel secure. If your readers would not be familiar with what swaddling bands are, if you wish to retain the poetic image in your translation, you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture. Alternate translation: “and thick darkness its baby blanket” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 38:10

And I broke upon it my boundary

Yahweh may be referring implicitly to the way he **broke** off the edge of the land to make a **boundary** for the sea. This could be a description of the cliffs that serve as the boundary between the land and the sea in many places. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "And I broke off the land to make a boundary for the sea" or "And at the edge of the land I made cliffs that the sea cannot flow over" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and I set a bar and doors

Since Yahweh would first have made **doors** and then a **bar** to put across them to keep them shut, it may be more natural to mention the doors first. Alternate translation: "and I set doors and a bar" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

and I set a bar and doors

As in verse 8, Yahweh is speaking as if he had literally set up **doors** to keep the sea from flowing onto the land. See how you translated the similar expression there. Alternate translation: "and I set up floodgates to hold the sea back" or "and I restrained the sea from flowing onto the land" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:11

and I said, 'Unto here you will come, but you will not continue, and here one has set for the pride of your waves

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "And I told the sea that it could come up to that point but not go any farther, yes, that I had established that boundary for its proud waves" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

and I said, 'Unto here you will come, but you will not continue, and here one has set for the pride of your waves

Yahweh spoke to the sea, even though he knew that it could not hear him or understand him, in order to show in a strong way how he felt about the boundary he had established between the land and the sea in order to ensure an orderly creation. If a speaker in your language would not speak to something that could not hear or understand him, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and I declared that the sea could come up to that point but not go any farther, yes, that that would be the boundary for its proud waves" (See: **Apostrophe (p.1139)**)

one has set

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "one has set a boundary" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

one has set

The pronoun **one** could be: (1) an indefinite pronoun that does not have a specific referent in the immediate context. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this with a different expression that does not use an indefinite pronoun. Alternate translation: "a boundary has been set" (2) a pronoun that Yahweh is using to speak of himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the second person. Alternate translation: "I have set a boundary" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

for the pride of your waves

Yahweh is using this possessive form to describe **waves** that are characterized by **pride**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "your proud waves" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

for the pride of your waves

Yahweh is speaking of the **waves** of the sea as if they were living things that could have **pride**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "for your mighty waves" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 38:12

From your days

Yahweh is using the term **days** to refer to a specific time, the lifetime of Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Ever in your lifetime" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

have you commanded the morning

Yahweh is speaking of the **morning** as if it were a living thing that Job could have **commanded**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "have you made the day begin" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Have you caused the dawn to know its place

Yahweh is speaking of the **dawn** as if it were a living thing whose **place** Job could have shown to it. Yahweh is referring to the way that the sun rises in a slightly different place each day, making the dawn appear in a slightly different location. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Have you made the sun rise in the right place" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 38:13

for taking hold of the edges of the earth, and the wicked are shaken from it

Yahweh is continuing to speak of the **dawn** as if it were a living thing, in this case speaking as if the dawn could take **hold** of the **edges of the earth** and shake it to make **the wicked** fall off of it. This is a reference to the way, as Job said in [24:14-15](#), that criminals commit their crimes during the night, not during the day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “so that it will become light upon the earth and the wicked will stop committing crimes” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

for taking hold of the edges of the earth

See how you translated the similar expression in [37:3](#), where it was also evident that people in this culture believed that the **earth** was a flat surface that had **edges**. Alternate translation: “so that it will become light all around the world” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the wicked are shaken from it

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “in order to shake the wicked from it” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the wicked

Yahweh is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 38:14

It is changed & and they stand out

The pronoun **it** refers to the earth and the pronoun **they** refers to the features of the earth. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "The earth is changed ... and its features stand out" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

It is changed like clay {under} a seal

The point of this comparison is that just as plain **clay** takes on distinct features when it is pressed **under a seal**, so the features of the earth become distinct in the light of day. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "Its features change from indistinct to distinct, just as clay takes on distinct features when it is pressed under a seal" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

It is changed

Yahweh means implicitly that this happens at dawn. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "When the light of day shines on it, it is changed" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

It is changed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "The light of day changes it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

like a garment

Yahweh is using the term **garment** by association to mean the folds of a garment. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "like the folds of a garment" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 38:15

from the wicked

Yahweh is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

And & their light is withheld

For emphasis, Yahweh is saying the opposite of what he means. As Job said in [24:16–17](#), for wicked people, day is like night (they stay at home and do not know what is going on outside) and night is like day (that is when they go out). So here Yahweh is speaking as if night were **light**, saying how wicked people see this from their perspective. If a speaker of your language would not say the opposite of what he means, in your translation you could indicate what Yahweh actually means. Alternate translation: “And ... their opportunity to go out and commit crimes is withheld” (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

And & their light is withheld

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “And ... the day withholds their opportunity to go out and commit crimes” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and their high arm is broken

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “and their high arm breaks” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

and their high arm is broken

Yahweh is speaking as if each wicked person had lifted his **arm up high** in order to strike a vulnerable person violently with it but that the arm had then been **broken** so that the wicked person could not use it that way. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and they cannot commit violence against anyone” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:16

the springs of the sea

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, people in this culture believed that there were **springs** at the bottom of the **sea** that provided it with water. As the parallel statement in the second part of the verse indicates, the focus of this question is on the bottom of the sea rather than on these springs themselves. You could say that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “the bottom of the sea” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 38:17

Have the gates of death been revealed to you

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Has anyone revealed the gates of death to you" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Have the gates of death been revealed to you

Yahweh is using the term **death** by association to mean Sheol, the abode of the dead. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Have the gates of Sheol been revealed to you" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Have the gates of death been revealed to you

Yahweh is using the term **gates**, meaning the entrance into Sheol, by association to mean the ability to go freely about in Sheol. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Has anyone shown you how to get into Sheol" or "Have you been able to go about in Sheol" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Or have you seen the gates of deep darkness

Yahweh is using the term **deep darkness** by association to mean death and thus, in this context, the abode of the dead. So this question means basically the same thing as the first question in the verse, and you can translate it in the same way. Alternate translation: "Indeed, have you seen how to get into the abode of the dead" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 38:18

to the breadths of the earth

Yahweh is using the plural form **breadths** in a context where the singular term “breadth” would suffice. This suggests that he is using the plural form for emphasis. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: “to how very broad the earth is” (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Declare

See how you translated the term “Declare” in [38:4](#). Alternate translation: “Explain how wide the earth is” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

you know all of it

The pronoun **it** refers to the earth. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “you know everything about the earth” or “you have seen all the way to the edge of the earth” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 38:19

Where {is} this, the way {to where} light dwells

As a note to 9:9 explains, people in this culture believed that natural forces were kept in chambers or storerooms. Elihu said in 37:9 that the storm was coming from its “chamber.” Yahweh asks Job in verse 22 of this chapter whether he has seen the “storehouses” of the snow and hail. Here Yahweh is asking similarly whether Job knows how to get to the place where **light dwells**, that is, the place where he keeps light in order to have it available for use within creation. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that uses terms that reflect your own culture’s understanding of creation. Alternate translation: “Do you know where the light of day goes when it is night” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and darkness, where {is} this, its place

This question means something similar to the question in the first part of the verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate it similarly. Alternate translation: “and do you know where the darkness of night goes during the day” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

Job 38:20

that you would take it to its territory, and that you would perceive the paths of its house

By **it** and **its**, Yahweh is referring specifically to darkness, which he mentioned in the latter part of the previous verse, but he is using darkness to mean both darkness and light. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use plural forms in your translation. Alternate translation: “that you would take them to their territories, and that you would perceive the paths of their houses” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

that you would take it to its territory, and that you would perceive the paths of its house

Job would need to **perceive** how to get to the **houses** of light and darkness before he could **take** them there, so it might be more natural to reverse the order of these clauses. Alternate translation: “that you would perceive the paths of their houses and take them to their territories” (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

the paths of its house

Yahweh is speaking of the places where light and darkness are kept as if they were literally **houses** in which they lived and as if there were literally **paths** that led to those houses. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “how to get to where it is kept” or “how to get to where they are kept” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:21

You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days {is} many

For emphasis, Yahweh is saying the opposite of what he means. If a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could indicate what he actually means. Alternate translation: "You must admit that you actually do not know any of these things, since you were not born then; the number of your days is not that many" (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

you were born

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "you were alive" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

then

By **then**, Yahweh implicitly means when he created all of the things he has been describing. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "when I created all of these things" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and the number of your days {is} many

While Job actually has lived for a certain **number of days**, Yahweh is probably using the term **days** to refer to a specific time, the lifetime of Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and you have lived for such a long time" or "and you have had such a long lifetime" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 38:22

Have you entered into the storehouses of the snow, or have you seen the storehouses of the hail

People in this culture believed that natural forces were kept in chambers or storerooms. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could translate this with an equivalent expression that uses terms that reflect your own culture's understanding of creation. Alternate translation: "Have you traveled into the sky, where snow and hail form" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 38:23

which I keep

The pronoun **which** refers to both the “snow” and the “hail” that Yahweh mentioned in the previous verse, but especially to the hail, which he used to defeat his enemies in battles such as the one described in [Joshua 10:1-15](#). It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers, and it may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “I keep snow and especially hail” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

for a time of trouble

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **trouble**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: “for a time when people are fighting” (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

for a day of battle and war

Yahweh is using the term **day** to refer to a specific time. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “for a time when there is battle and war” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

battle and war

The terms **battle** and **war** mean similar things. Yahweh is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: “great warfare” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 38:24

to where} the light is distributed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "to the place from which the light radiates" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

the east wind scatters over the earth

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "What is the way to the place from which the east wind scatters over the earth" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 38:25

cut a channel for the downpour

Yahweh is speaking as if a **channel** had literally been **cut** in the sky in order to direct the **downpour** of rain to certain locations (such as the next two verses describe). If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “made sure that rain would fall in certain places” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

or a way for the lightning of the thunder

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “or who made a way for the lightning of the thunder” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

or a way for the lightning of the thunder

Yahweh seems to be using this possessive form to mean both **lightning** and **thunder**, and he seems to be using both of them to mean the thunderstorm in which they would occur. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “or who made a way for the thunderstorm” or “or who directed the thunderstorm to the right place” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 38:26

man {is}, & man

In both instances here, the masculine term **man** has a generic sense that includes both men and women. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use language in your translation that is clearly inclusive of both men and women. Alternate translation: "people are ... people" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 38:27

to satisfy

Yahweh is speaking of an arid region as if it were a living thing that was thirsty and that rain could **satisfy**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to water" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the waste and the desolation

The terms **waste** and **desolation** mean similar things. Yahweh is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "the arid desert" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 38:28

Is there a father to the rain? Or who begets the drops of dew

Yahweh is speaking as if the **rain** and the **dew** had an actual **father**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "How does rain form? And how does dew form?" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:29

From whose womb does ice come? And the frost of the skies, who bears it

Yahweh is speaking as if **ice** and **frost** had an actual mother. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Where does ice come from? And where does the frost of the skies come from?" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

And the frost of the skies

Yahweh assumes that Job will understand that by **the frost of the skies**, he means the frost that is on the ground in the morning after a cold night and that appears to have fallen from the sky, even though it is actually dew that has formed on the ground and frozen. (Yahweh is not referring to snow, which falls visibly from the sky.) You could indicate this in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "And the frost that appears to have fallen from the skies" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 38:30

As {under} stone, the waters hide themselves, and the face of the deep freezes

Yahweh is describing further natural phenomena that, like the ice and frost he described in the previous verse, occur when it is cold. Yahweh is suggesting that if Job is as wise as he claims, he ought to be able to explain these as well. So this is implicitly a question. You could translate it that way if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Can you explain how, in cold weather, the waters hide themselves as under stone, and the face of the deep freezes?" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

As {under} stone

The point of this comparison is that just as it is not possible to see through **stone**, it is typically not possible to see through the ice that forms on top of **the waters** in the winter. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "As under stone through which one cannot see" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

the waters hide themselves

Yahweh is speaking as if the **waters** were living things that could **hide themselves**. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the waters are hidden" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and the face of

Yahweh is using the term **face** in a specific sense to mean "surface." Alternate translation: "and the surface of" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 38:31

Will you tie the bands of the Pleiades, or loose the cords of Orion

See how you translated the names **Pleiades** and **Orion** in 9:9. Alternate translation: “Will you tie the bands of the Seven Sisters, or loose the cords of the Hunter” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

Will you tie the bands of the Pleiades, or loose the cords of Orion

Yahweh is speaking as if these constellations were held together in the sky by **bands** and **cords**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Are you the one who keeps the stars in the Pleiades together? Would you be able to make the stars in Orion drift apart” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

or loose the cords of Orion

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: “Or will you loose the cords of Orion” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 38:32

Will you bring out Mazzaroth in its time

The word **Mazzaroth** seems to be the name of another constellation of stars, but it is no longer clear to which constellation this name applies. You could translate this as a general reference. Alternate translation: “Will you bring out the constellations in their time” or “Will you make each of the constellations appear in the sky at the right time” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Or will you guide the Bear with its sons

See how you translated the name **Bear** in 9:. The term **sons** seems to apply to the stars that trail off into the sky from the main part of this constellation. Alternate translation: “Or will you make the Big Dipper and its handle appear in the right place” (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

Or will you guide the Bear with its sons

Yahweh is speaking of the constellation that this culture called the **Bear** as if it were a living thing that Job could have guided. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Or will you position the Big Dipper and its handle properly in the sky” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

its sons

Here the masculine term **sons** has a generic sense that would include both male and female young bears. Some languages may have a general term for the offspring of bears that would convey this sense. Other languages may use both the masculine and feminine forms of such a term. Alternate translation: “its cubs” (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

Job 38:33

the statutes of the skies

Yahweh is using this possessive form to **statutes** that apply to the **skies**, not statutes that the skies have enacted. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “the statutes that govern the sky” or “how the movements of the sun, moon, and stars are regulated” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

If you will establish its rule over the earth

Although the pronoun **its** is singular, it refers to the **skies**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a plural pronoun in your translation. Alternate translation: “If you will establish their rule over the earth” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

If you will establish its rule over the earth

Yahweh is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “You are not able to establish their rule over the earth, are you” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If you will establish its rule over the earth

Yahweh is speaking as if the **skies** literally ruled over the **earth**. He is likely referring to the way that the sun heats the earth, cloud cover cools the earth, and so forth. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Can you make what happens in the sky influence conditions on the earth” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:34

Will you raise your voice

Yahweh is speaking of how Job might **raise** his **voice** by association to mean how Job might shout out a command. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Will you shout a command" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

to the cloud

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **cloud**. He means clouds in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "to the clouds" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

and an abundance of waters will cover you

By **waters**, Yahweh implicitly means rain. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and make heavy rain fall on you" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 38:35

Will you send out lightning bolts and they will go, and they will say to you, 'Behold, us

If Job actually were to command **lightning bolts**, they would first say to him, **Behold, us**, and then they would **go** to where Job was sending them. So it may be more natural to put the information about what they would say before the information that they would go. Alternate translation: "If you wanted to send out lightning bolts, would they say to you, 'Behold, us,' and then go where you sent them" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

and they will say to you, 'Behold, us

The expression **Behold, us** was the way that servants in this culture responded when their masters summoned them. They were telling their masters that they were available to serve them in whatever way was needed. Your culture may have a comparable expression that you can use in your translation. Alternate translation: "and they will say to you, 'At your service'" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and they will say to you, 'Behold, us

If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: "and they will tell you that they are at your service" (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Job 38:36

Who has put wisdom in the clouds, or who has given understanding to the mist

The meaning of the terms translated **clouds** and **mist** is no longer clear, although these terms seem to refer to some phenomena of the skies, since that is the subject of verses 22–38. However, some versions nevertheless translate these terms as references to parts of the human body or to birds. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the terms that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use terms comparable to the ones that the ULT uses. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Who has put wisdom in the clouds, or who has given understanding to the mist

If the terms translated **clouds** and **mist** do refer to phenomena of the skies, Yahweh is speaking of these phenomena as if they were living things that could have **wisdom** and **understanding** to know where they should form and when. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Who makes sure that clouds and mist form in the right places at the right times” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 38:37

Or the water skins of the skies, who will tilt

Yahweh is speaking of the clouds in the **skies** as if they were **water skins**, containers for liquid made of animals skins, like the wineskins that Elihu described in [32:19](#). When Yahweh asks who will **tilt** these water skins, he means who will tip them over so that they pour out their contents. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Or who will make the clouds pour out water onto the earth" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 38:38

in the hardening of the dust into a mass, and the clods stick together

Yahweh is describing how the **dust** of the ground hardens into a **mass* and how the clods of earth** stick together** by association to refer to a prolonged period of drought. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to water the earth when it is very dry from a long drought" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 38:39

or satisfy the life of {her} cubs

Yahweh is using the term **life** by association to mean hunger, since eating is necessary to sustain life. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “or satisfy the hunger of her cubs” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

or satisfy the life of {her} cubs

Yahweh is using the word **or** to introduce what would happen as a result of what he described in the preceding phrase. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: “in order to satisfy the hunger of her cubs” or “so that she can feed her cubs” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 38:40

they crouch in their dens, when} they lie in wait

The pronouns **they** and **their** refer to the lioness that Yahweh described in the previous verse. It may be more natural in your language to use singular forms here. Alternate translation: “she crouches in her den, when she lies in wait” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

in a shelter

The general term **shelter** refers implicitly to a thicket or some other place where a lioness could conceal herself. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “in a thicket” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 38:41

to the raven its food when its children

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **raven**. He means ravens in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: “food for the ravens when their children” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

to the raven its food

A **raven** is a large bird with shiny black feathers that feeds on dead animals. If your readers would not be familiar with what a raven is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable bird in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “food for the birds” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

when its children cry out to God

Yahweh is referring to how baby birds chirp loudly and continually when they need food. He is saying that he hears this as a prayer, as if the baby birds were crying out to him for what they needed. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “when its offspring chirp loudly for food as if they were crying out to God for it” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

to God

Yahweh is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: “to me” (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

when} they stagger without food

Yahweh is speaking as if the baby ravens would literally **stagger**, that is, walk as if they could barely stand up. He means that they would act in a way that showed they were weak with hunger. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “when they are weak with hunger” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 39

Job 39 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is a continuation of Yahweh's response to Job.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

In this chapter, Yahweh continues to ask Job questions that show that Job does not understand the workings of the created world. Yahweh began to ask Job questions about animals and birds in [38:39](#); he continues to do that in this chapter.

The implication continues to be that if Job does not understand and cannot explain how God makes things work in the visible creation, he certainly does not understand and cannot explain what God is doing as he works in unseen, mysterious ways to accomplish his purposes in the lives of people and over the course of human history.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

The nature of Yahweh's questions to Job

As in the previous chapter, Yahweh may want Job to try to answer the questions he is asking so that Job will have to admit that he does not know the answers. Alternatively, Yahweh may be using the question form for emphasis. Consider the most appropriate way to translate each of the questions in this chapter.

Job 39:1

Do you know the time of the bearing of the goats of the rock

As the General Notes to this chapter discuss, this could mean: (1) that Yahweh wants Job to try to answer this question and the questions in the rest of the chapter so that Job will have to admit that he does not know the answers. Alternate translation: "You do not know the time of the bearing of the goats of the rock, do you?" (2) that Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If you would not use the question form for that purpose in your language, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "You do not know the time of the bearing of the goats of the rock!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the goats of the rock

Yahweh is using the term **rock** by association to identify these goats by where they live. Your language may have its own name for goats of this type that identifies them by where they live. If not, you could identify them with a descriptive phrase. Alternate translation: "mountain goats" or "wild goats" or "goats that live among the rocks" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Will you watch the fawning of the does

The implication of this question is that Job would have to know when female deer were going to bear their fawns in order to be there to **watch** them give birth. So this question means basically the same thing as the first question in the verse. You could indicate this meaning in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Would you know when the does were going to give birth to their fawns so that you could be there to watch" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 39:2

they will fulfill

Yahweh is referring implicitly to the **number** of **months** that the does will **fulfill** or complete before they give birth to their fawns. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "they will fulfill before giving birth" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 39:3

they cast forth their labor pains

Yahweh is using the expression **labor pains** by association to mean the fawns that the does deliver after going into labor. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “they deliver their children” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 39:4

Their sons & to them

The pronouns **Their** and **them** are masculine, meaning that they refer to the fathers and mothers of these young deer. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Your language may similarly use masculine plural pronouns for a group of two or more subjects that includes both male and female individuals. If not, you could show the meaning by using an explanatory phrase. Alternate translation: "The sons of does and bucks ... to their parents" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Their sons

Here the masculine term **sons** has a generic sense that would include both male and female young deer. Some languages may have a general term for the offspring of deer that would convey this sense. Other languages may use both the masculine and feminine forms of such a term. Alternate translation: "their fawns" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

in the field

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **field**. He means fields in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "in the fields" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 39:5

the wild donkey & the donkey

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **wild donkey**. He means wild donkeys in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using plural forms. Alternate translation: “the wild donkeys ... these donkeys” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 39:6

whose house I have made the Arabah, and his habitations the salt land

In some languages it may be more natural to mention the place first and then give the information that Yahweh had made this a place for wild donkeys to live in. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "I have made the Arabah his house, yes, I have made the salt land his habitations" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

whose house I have made the Arabah

Yahweh is speaking as if the **Arabah** or desert were literally a **house** in which a wild donkey lived. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "to whom I have given the Arabah as a place to live" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

and his habitations the salt land

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "and whose habitations I have made in the salt land" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

and his habitations the salt land

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **habitations**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "yes, to whom I have given the salt land as a place to inhabit" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

the salt land

Yahweh is using the term **salt land** to refer by association to a particular area of the desert where there is much salt in the soil and, as a result, few plants can grow. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the barren land" or "the desert" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 39:7

It laughs at the commotion of the city

Yahweh is speaking of the wild donkey as if it could consciously express by laughing what it was thinking and feeling. Here the term **laughs** implicitly means laughing scornfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It prefers being in the desert to being in the city" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the shouts of the driver it does not hear

If this donkey had a **driver** who forced it to go places and do things, one thing that would happen is that the donkey would **hear** the **shouts** of the driver, that is, the commands that the driver was shouting at it. Yahweh is using this one thing to represent the entire possibility of the donkey having an owner and driver. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it has no owner who shouts at it to make it go places and do things" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 39:8

every green thing

Yahweh is using the term **green** by association to mean any green herb or plant that would grow in the desert. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "any plant that it can eat" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 39:9

Will the wild ox consent to serve you

Yahweh is speaking of the **wild ox** as if it were a living thing that could **consent** to **serve** Job. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Would a wild ox plow your fields without balking" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

If it will lodge by your manger

Yahweh is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "It would not lodge by your manger, would it" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

your manger

A **manger** was a box or frame in which people put hay or other food for animals to eat. In this culture, animals were often kept near a home to keep them safe and so that their owners could feed them easily. If your readers would not be familiar with what a manger is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "your feeding trough" or "the box in which you put food for your farm animals" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 39:10

Will you bind a wild ox in a furrow {with} its rope

Yahweh is asking implicitly whether Job could use **rope** to harness a **wild ox** to a plow that was in a **furrow**. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Can you harness a wild ox to a plow and get it to plow furrows in your field" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

If it will harrow the valleys after you

Yahweh is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "It would not harrow the valleys after you, would it" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If it will harrow the valleys after you

In this culture, farmers would lead a draft animal from the front as it pulled a harrow behind it. That is why Yahweh says **after you**. If farmers in your culture who harrow with draft animals instead walk behind the harrow, you could translate this in a way that expressed the general meaning without specifying a particular method of harrowing. Alternate translation: "Could you use it to harrow your fields in the valleys" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

it will harrow the valleys

To **harrow** means to smooth and break up soil once it has been plowed. If your readers would not be familiar with what it means to harrow a field, in your translation you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "it will pull a light implement to smooth and break up the soil in your fields in the valleys" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 39:11

Will you trust in it because its strength is great? Will you leave your labor to it

Yahweh means implicitly that Job or any other human being would not be able to trust a wild ox as a farm animal, because it could not be trained to do field work. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Would you really be able to trust a wild ox, because it was so strong, to do the hard part of your farm work" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 39:12

Will you depend on it, that it will bring in your seed and gather {it} {to} your threshing floor

As in the previous verse, Yahweh means implicitly that Job or any other human being would not be able to depend on a wild ox to do the work of a farm animal. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Would you really be able to depend on it to bring in your grain from your fields to your threshing floor" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 39:13

The wing of ostriches flaps vigorously

Since the word **wing** applies to many **ostriches**, it may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "The wings of ostriches flap vigorously" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

The wing of ostriches flaps vigorously

Ostriches cannot fly; this is a reference to the way they flap their wings vigorously when they run. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "The wings of ostriches flap vigorously when they run" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

ostriches

See how you translated the expression "daughters of clamor" in [30:29](#). Here Yahweh uses a different term for the same kind of bird. (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

If {it is} a kind feather and plumage

The terms **feather** and **plumage** mean similar things. Yahweh is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "If they are kind feathers" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

If {it is} a kind feather and plumage

Yahweh is using one part of an ostrich, its feathers, to mean all of it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If it is a kind bird" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

If {it is} a kind feather and plumage

Yahweh is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "But it is not a kind bird, is it" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If {it is} a kind feather and plumage

The word translated **kind** is also the word for another type of bird called a "stork." The stork was given that name because it was kind to its young. So it is possible that Yahweh is comparing the ostrich directly to the stork here. Many versions of the Bible translate this verse that way. If a translation of the Bible exists in your region, you may wish to use the reading that it uses. If a translation of the Bible does not exist in your region, you may wish to use the reading of ULT. Alternate translation: "But it is not a bird like the stork, is it" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 39:14

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 39:15

and it forgets that

Yahweh is speaking of an ostrich as if it could consciously **forget** than an animal might crush her eggs if she left them on the ground. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and it does this even though” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

might crush it & might trample it

The pronoun **it** refers in both of these instances to the ostrich's eggs, which Yahweh described in the previous verse. It may be more natural in your language to use plural pronouns for the eggs. Alternate translation: “might crush them ... might trample them” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

a foot might crush it

Yahweh is using one part of an animal, its **foot**, to mean all of it in the act of stepping on the eggs of an ostrich. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “an animal might step on them” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 39:16

its sons

Here the masculine term **sons** has a generic sense that would include both male and female young ostriches. Some languages may have a general term for the offspring of birds that would convey this sense. Other languages may use both the masculine and feminine forms of such a term. Alternate translation: "its chicks" (See: **When Masculine Words Include Women (p.1303)**)

vain {is} its labor, without fear

Yahweh is speaking of an ostrich as if it could consciously feel **fear** that the **labor** it had expended to have offspring might be in **vain**, that is, the offspring might die, if it did not take better care of them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it does not carefully protect their lives" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 39:17

God has caused it to forget wisdom, and he has not given understanding to it

Yahweh is speaking of an ostrich as if it could consciously **forget** any **wisdom** it might have acquired and as if it might possess **understanding**. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly.

Alternate translation: "God has not given it the instincts to take better care of its young" (See: **Personification (p. 1253)**)

God has caused it to forget wisdom, and he has not given

Yahweh is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "I have caused it to forget wisdom, and I have not given" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Job 39:18

As for the time it lifts itself on high

Yahweh is implicitly drawing a contrast between the apparently foolish behavior of the ostrich as a mother and its impressive physical capabilities, specifically how fast and powerfully it can run. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate the contrast explicitly in your translation. Alternate translation: “Nevertheless, when it lifts itself on high” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

As for the time it lifts itself on high

This expression does not refer to the ostrich flying, since ostriches cannot fly. Rather, it is a reference to what an ostrich does in order to run. It stretches to its full height and spreads and flaps its wings. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Nevertheless, when it runs” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

it laughs at the horse and at its rider

Yahweh is speaking of the ostrich as if it could consciously express by laughing what it was thinking and feeling. Here the term **laughs** implicitly means laughing scornfully. The ostrich would express scorn towards a **horse** and its **rider** because it could run faster than the horse. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “it can run even faster than a horse” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 39:19

to the horse? & its neck {with} a mane

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **horse**. He means horses in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: "to horses ... their necks with manes" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Have you clothed its neck {with} a mane

Yahweh is speaking as if the **mane** of a **horse** were clothing that it wore. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Were you the one who gave horses such splendid manes" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 39:20

Have you made it jump like a locust

The point of this comparison is that a horse can **jump** high and gracefully, just as a **locust** can easily jump high for its size. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "Are you the one who gave horses such graceful and powerful jumping ability" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 39:21

They paw in the valley

The pronoun **They** refers to horses. Since Yahweh uses singular pronouns in the rest of this section, it may be natural in your language to use a singular form here as well. Alternate translation: "It paws in the valley" or "A horse paws in the valley" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

They paw in the valley

Yahweh is using the term **valley** by association to mean a battleground, since at this time armies would fight against each other in valleys. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Before a battle, a horse paws the ground" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

and it rejoices in strength

Yahweh is speaking of a horse as if it could consciously **rejoice** over the **strength** that it had. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and it prances mightily" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 39:22

It laughs at fear and it is not frightened

Yahweh is speaking of the horse as if it could consciously express by laughing what it was thinking and feeling. Here the term **laughs** implicitly means laughing scornfully. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It does not feel fear; no, it is not frightened" (See: **Personification (p. 1253)**)

It laughs at fear and it is not frightened

These two expressions mean similar things. Yahweh is using them terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "It is not afraid at all" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

and it does not turn back from the face of the sword

If it would be clearer in your language, you could use a positive expression to translate this double negative that consists of the negative particle **not** and the negative verb **turn back**. Alternate translation: "and it charges forward to the face of the sword" (See: **Double Negatives (p.1169)**)

from the face of the sword

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person or thing by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "from the presence of the sword" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

from the face of the sword

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **sword**. He means swords in general and, by extension, all the weapons of an enemy army. Alternate translation: "from the weapons it encounters" (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 39:23

The quiver rattles upon him

A **quiver** is a container that holds arrows. At this time, quivers were typically made of leather. If your readers would not be familiar with what a quiver is, you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "The container for its rider's arrows bounces against its side" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

the flashing of the spear and the javelin

Yahweh is leaving some words that in many languages this sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "as does the flashing of the spear and the javelin" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

the flashing of the spear and the javelin

Yahweh is using this possessive form to describe a **spear** and **javelin** that are characterized by **flashing**. These may have been made of wood, but they would have had metal points that gleamed in the sunlight. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "as do the spear and javelin whose points glisten in the sunlight" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 39:24

it swallows the ground

Yahweh is speaking as if a horse literally **swallows** the **ground** when it runs fast over it. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “it races over the ground” or “it gallops across the ground” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

With shaking and rage

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **rage** tells why the horse is **shaking**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation, preceded by a comma: “shaking with rage” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

when {there is} the sound of the horn

Yahweh is referring implicitly to when someone would blow a **horn** to signal that the army should advance into battle. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “when it hears a horn sound the battle call” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and it does not stand still

Yahweh is expressing a positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of his intended meaning. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and it charges forward” (See: **Litotes (p.1232)**)

Job 39:25

In the abundance of the horn

This expression means “as often as the horn sounds.” If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “As often as the horn sounds” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

it says, ‘Aha

Yahweh is speaking of a horse as if it could speak and use this expression to show its delight. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “it snorts enthusiastically.” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

it smells the battle

Yahweh is using the term **battle** by association to mean the enemy army that is approaching to fight a battle with the army to which the horse belongs. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “it smells the enemy army approaching ” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

the thunder of the princes and the battle-cry

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “it hears the thunder of the princes and the battle-cry” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

the thunder of the princes

Yahweh is speaking as if the loud orders that the **princes** or commanders were shouting to their troops were literally **thunder**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the loud shouts of the princes” or “the loudly shouted orders of the princes” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 39:26

does the hawk soar, does it stretch its wings

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **hawk**. He means hawks in general. It may be more natural in your language to express this meaning by using a plural form. Alternate translation: “do hawks soar, do they stretch their wings” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

the hawk

A **hawk** is a bird of prey, typically with rounded wings and a long tail. If your readers would not be familiar with what a hawk is, in your translation you could use the name of a similar bird that your readers would recognize, or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “a bird of prey” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

does it stretch its wings toward the south

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “by your wisdom does it stretch its wings toward the south” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

does it stretch its wings toward the south

Yahweh is using the phrase **stretch its wings** by association to mean flying. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “does it fly toward the south” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

does it stretch its wings toward the south

Yahweh is referring implicitly to the way that hawks and other birds in the northern hemisphere migrate south to warmer weather when winter is approaching. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “does it migrate to a warmer climate for the winter” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 39:27

If at your mouth the eagle mounts up and that its nest is high

Yahweh is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "It is not at your mouth that the eagle mounts up and that its nest is high, is it" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

at your mouth

Yahweh is using the term **mouth** to mean by association what Job may have said with his mouth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "at your instruction" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 39:28

It dwells and lodges

The terms **dwells** and **lodges** mean similar things. Yahweh is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "It lives all the time" or "It makes its home" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

the peak of a crag and a stronghold

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two expressions connected with **and**. The word **stronghold** describes the character of a **peak of a crag**. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use "and." Alternate translation: "on the inaccessible peak of a crag" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 39:29

its eyes look to from afar

See how you translated the expression “to from afar” in [36:3](#). Alternate translation: “its eyes look to distant places” (See: [Idiom \(p.1207\)](#))

its eyes look to from afar

Yahweh is using one part of an eagle, its **eyes**, to mean all of it in the act of looking for food. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “it can spot its prey far in the distance” (See: [Synecdoche \(p.1294\)](#))

Job 39:30

And its eaglets suck up blood

Yahweh is using one thing that **eaglets** do when they consume freshly killed prey, **suck up blood**, to mean the entire act of eating such prey, which would include smaller birds and small mammals. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And it brings fresh prey for its eaglets to eat" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

and at where the slain {are}, there it is

Yahweh is using the adjective **slain** as a noun to mean people and animals in a certain condition. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this word with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "but it also feeds on the flesh of people and animals that others have killed" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 40

Job 40 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

The ULT sets the lines of verses 1–2, 4–5, and 7–24 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are poetry.

- Verses 1–2: Yahweh challenges Job to respond to what he has said so far.
- Verses 3–5: Job replies that he has nothing to say in response.
- Verses 6–14 Yahweh tells Job that if he wishes to judge the world as he would do, he must display power and justice in subduing wicked people.
- Verses 15–24 Yahweh tells Job to consider a great creature named Behemoth.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Behemoth

To help Job continue to recognize that he occupies a small and insignificant place within creation, Yahweh describes the strength and power of one of his great creatures, Behemoth. While this animal was known in the time of Job, its exact identity is now uncertain. You may therefore wish to use the name Behemoth in your translation, spelling it the way it sounds in your language, rather than trying to specify a particular animal that Yahweh is describing. The UST models this approach.

Special Concepts in This Chapter

Justice

In verse 8, Yahweh asks Job whether he wishes to decide what is right. and then in the next verse, Yahweh asks Job whether he has great power. However, Yahweh is not suggesting that might makes right. Rather, he is asking Job whether he has the might to make things right, as he then describes in verses 10–14. In verse 10, the terms "majesty," "greatness," "glory," and "splendor" describe moral qualities, not simply power. See if you have terms available in your language that can convey this meaning in your translation.

Job 40:1

And Yahweh answered Job and said

See how you translated the similar expression in [34:1](#). Alternate translation: “And Yahweh said to Job, in light of all that he had just said” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 40:2

Is} a reprove to contend with the Almighty? The one correcting God, let him answer it

The Almighty is speaking about himself in the third person, and though he is addressing Job directly, he is also speaking about him in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could have the Almighty speak of himself in the first person and of Job in the second person. Alternate translation: "You said you wanted to reprove me, the Almighty; do you still wish to contend with me? You said you wanted to correct me, God; if so, then you must answer it" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

The one correcting God, let him answer it

God is using the pronoun **it** to refer to everything he has just said to Job. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "If you still think you can correct me, then respond to everything I have just said to you" (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

Job 40:3

And Job answered Yahweh and said

Here the narrator expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **answered** tells for what purpose a person **said** something. Specifically, the person said it in order to answer or respond to what someone else said. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “And Job responded to Yahweh” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 40:4

how shall I answer you

Job is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "I am not able to answer you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

I put my hand over my mouth

Putting his **hand** over his **mouth** was a symbolic action by which Job showed that he had nothing to say in response to Yahweh. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. You could also use an expression from your language and culture that has the same significance. Alternate translation: "I put my hand over my mouth so that I will not say anything" or "I bite my tongue" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 40:5

I spoke once, but I will not answer, and twice, but I will not continue

As Eliphaz did in [5:19](#) and as Elihu did in [33:14](#) and [33:29](#), here Job is naming a number that should be sufficient to illustrate his point and then increasing that number by one for emphasis. This was a common device in Hebrew poetry, but if a speaker of your language would not do this, in your translation you could express the emphasis another way. Alternate translation: “Though I was insisting that you were wrong, I will not say that any longer” (See: **Parallelism (p.1250)**)

but I will not answer

Job is implicitly using the term **answer** in the same sense that the narrator used it in verse 1 and in [34:1](#). That is, Job means that he will not say more things in light of what he has already said and thus, in a sense, in answer to them. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “but I will say nothing further” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 40:6

And Yahweh answered Job from the storm and said

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **answered** tells for what purpose a person **said** something. Specifically, the person said it in order to answer or respond to what someone else said. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “And from the storm Yahweh responded to Job” (See: **Hendiadys (p. 1193)**)

Job 40:7

gird up your loins

See how you translated the same expression in [38:3](#). Alternate translation: “you must continue to take part in a difficult contest” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

like a man

See how you translated the same expression in [38:3](#). Alternate translation: “like a brave person” or “as a soldier would do when going into battle” (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

I will question you, and you will inform me

See how you translated the same expression in [38:3](#). Alternate translation: “I will question you and you can tell me what you think I do not already know” (See: **Irony (p.1221)**)

Job 40:8

Would you actually annul my judgment? Would you condemn me so that you may be right

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Do not think that you can actually annul my judgment! Do not think that you can condemn me so that you may be right!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Would you actually annul my judgment

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **judgment**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "Would you actually try to show that I do not judge people correctly?" or "Do not think that you can actually show that I do not judge people correctly!" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 40:9**Or if like God an arm {is} to you? Or like him will you thunder with a voice**

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You do not have an arm such as God has! You cannot thunder with a voice as he does!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Or if like God an arm {is} to you? Or like him will you thunder with a voice

God is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "Do you have an arm such as I have? Can you thunder with a voice such as I do?" or "You do not have an arm such as I have! You cannot thunder with a voice as I do!" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Or if like God an arm {is} to you

Yahweh is using the word **if** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "Now you do not have an arm such as I have, do you" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Or if like God an arm {is} to you

Here the **arm** of God represents his power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Now you do not have power such as I have, do you" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Or like him will you thunder with a voice

Yahweh is speaking as if his own **voice** literally made the sound of **thunder**. He means that his voice is very loud, and that shows how powerful he is. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Or do you have a loud and powerful voice such as I do" or "Or is it evident from the volume of your voice how powerful you are, as it is for me" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 40:10

Then

Yahweh is using the word **Then** to indicate what Job should do if he has the kind of power that Yahweh described in the previous verse. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "If you do, then" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

adorn yourself {in} majesty and greatness, and clothe yourself {in} glory and splendor

Yahweh is speaking as if he wanted Job literally to **adorn** and **clothe** himself with the qualities that he names. He means that Job ought to make it apparent that he has these qualities if he wishes to judge the world as Yahweh would do. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "display your majesty and greatness; show your glory and splendor" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

in} majesty and greatness, and & in} glory and splendor

The terms **majesty** and **greatness** mean similar things, and the terms **glory** and **splendor** also mean similar things. Yahweh is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "in great majesty, and ... in bright splendor" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

Job 40:11

Scatter the outbursts of your nose

Yahweh is speaking as if Job's **outbursts** were objects that he could **Scatter**. Elihu used the same word for "scatter" in [37:11](#) to describe how God made lightning bolts go to various places, so the implication seems to be that Yahweh is challenging Job to direct his righteous anger against his enemies if he has the power to do that. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Direct your righteous anger against all your enemies" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

proud one

Yahweh is using the adjective **proud** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. The ULT adds the word **one** to show that. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "proud person" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and bring him down

Yahweh is speaking as if Job would literally **bring** an arrogant person **down** from a height to a lower place. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and humble him" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 40:12

proud one

See how you translated the same expression in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “proud person” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

and trample

Yahweh is speaking as if he wants Job literally to **trample** or walk all over **wicked** people if he wishes to judge the world as Yahweh would do. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “and punish” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the wicked

Yahweh is using the adjective **wicked** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “wicked people” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

under them

As Elihu did similarly in [36:16](#), here Yahweh is using the expression **under them** to mean at the location on which these wicked people stand. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “right where they are” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 40:13

Hide them in the dust together

Yahweh is using the term **dust**, meaning the ground, by association to mean graves in which people are buried. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Bury them all in the ground” or “Bury them all in graves” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Hide them in the dust together

The implication is that Job should first judge and punish proud and wicked people, executing them for their crimes, and then bury them, if he wishes to judge the world as Yahweh would do. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: “Judge and execute all proud and wicked people for their crimes” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

cover their faces in the hidden {place}

Yahweh is referring to a cultural practice. This could mean: (1) the action of wrapping the head separately from the rest of the body when preparing a body for burial. Yahweh would be using this action to mean the entire act of burial, and this second part of the verse would mean the same thing as the first part of the verse. Alternate translation: “bury them in the hidden place” (2) the symbolic action of covering the face of a person who was about to be executed. (There is an example of this in the Bible in [Esther 7:8](#).) The face represented the person, and the fact that it could no longer be seen indicated that soon the person would no longer be alive. Yahweh would be using the covering of the face to mean the entire act of executing such criminals. Alternate translation: “execute them and put them in the hidden place” (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

in the hidden {place}

Yahweh is using the adjective **hidden** as a noun to mean a certain kind of place, the grave, into which people cannot see. The ULT adds the word **place** to show this. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: “in the grave” or “in the abode of the dead” (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 40:14

And then I will praise you

Yahweh is using the word **And** to introduce the second part of an implied conditional statement. He means that he will **praise** Job only if Job is able to do the things he has just described. Alternate translation: “Only then would I praise you” or “If you were able to do these things, then I would praise you” (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.1157)**)

I will praise you

For emphasis, Yahweh is stating the pronoun **I**, whose meaning is already present in the verb translated **praise**. If your language can state implied pronouns explicitly for emphasis, you may want to use that construction here in your translation. Other languages may have other ways of bringing out this emphasis. Alternate translation: “I myself will praise you” (See: **Pronouns — When to Use Them (p.1267)**)

your right hand

Here the **right hand** represents the power and control that people have over something. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “your power” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

your right hand

Yahweh is using the **right hand** as a symbol of strength because in this culture, a majority of the population more naturally used that hand. Yahweh is not saying that there is anything wrong with being left-handed. Particularly if many of the people in your culture naturally use their left hands, you may wish to use an equivalent expression here that does not name a particular hand. Alternate translation: “your own hand” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 40:15

behold

Yahweh is speaking as if he wants Job to **behold** or look at an animal that is not present. Yahweh is using sight to represent attention. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “consider” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Behemoth

See the discussion of the name **Behemoth** in the General Notes to this chapter to decide how to represent this name in your translation. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

which I made with you

Yahweh means that he made Behemoth just as he made Job, not that he made Behemoth at the same time when he made Job. Alternate translation: “which I myself created, just as I created you” (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

it eats grass like an ox

There is an implied contrast here. This great beast has the size and strength to hunt and kill other animals; nevertheless, it lives on plants. (This may be an implicit indication that such great wild beasts remain under the restraint of Yahweh.) You may wish to indicate this contrast in your translation, in a way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “despite its great size and strength, it eats grass like an ox” (See: **Connect — Contrast Relationship (p.1155)**)

grass

Yahweh is probably using one kind of plant, **grass**, to mean all kinds of green plants that animals eat. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “green plants” (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 40:16

Now behold, its strength {is} in his loins, and its power {is} in the muscles of his belly

Yahweh is once again using the term **behold** to mean “consider.” In this instance, it may be natural in your language to translate these statements as exclamations that are calling for Job’s attention. Alternate translation: “What strength it has in its loins! What power it has in the muscles of its belly!” (See: **Exclamations (p.1179)**)

Job 40:17

It bends its tail like a cedar

The point of this comparison is that just as the branch of a **cedar** tree is flexible but strong, so this beast can raise its tail and hold it flexibly in the air. The ability to hold a tail upright, which older animals can no longer do, is a sign of youthful strength. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "It shows its vigor by holding up its tail as if that were a cedar branch" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

the sinews of its thighs are intertwined

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "the sinews of its thighs hold tightly to one another" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 40:18

Its bones {are} tubes of bronze

Yahweh is speaking as if the **bones** of this beast were literally **tubes of bronze**. He is using the metal bronze to represent great strength, and he likely speaks of tubes because bones are hollow. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Its bones are very strong, as if they were made of bronze" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

its legs {are} like bars of iron

The point of this comparison is that just as **bars of iron** are very strong, so the **legs** of this beast are very strong. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "its legs are very strong, as if they were iron bars" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 40:19

It {is} the first of the ways of God

Yahweh is speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "It is the first of my ways" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p. 1183)**)

It {is} the first of the ways of God

Yahweh is speaking of the things that a person has done as if those were **ways** or paths that the person had walked along. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It is the first of my works" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

It {is} the first of the ways of God

Yahweh is using the word **first** in a particular sense to mean "chief" or "greatest." He does not mean that he created Behemoth before he created any other animal. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It is my greatest creature" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

It {is} the first of the ways of God

Yahweh is likely using the word **first**, meaning "greatest," as an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: "It is one of my most powerful creatures" (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Its Maker has brought near its sword

Yahweh is once again speaking about himself in the third person. If it would be helpful in your language, you could translate this in the first person. Alternate translation: "When I made it, I provided it with a sword" (See: **First, Second or Third Person (p.1183)**)

Its Maker has brought near its sword

Yahweh is speaking of Behemoth as if it literally had a **sword**. The following verse suggests that he is most likely referring to the long, sharp tusks that it used to shear the plants that it ate. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "When I made it, I provided it with long, sharp tusks" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 40:20

For

Yahweh is using the word **For** to introduce the reason why he created Behemoth with long, sharp tusks. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "I gave it tusks because" (See: **Connecting Words and Phrases (p.1163)**)

the hills provide food for it

Yahweh is speaking of these **hills** as if they were living things that could **provide food** for Behemoth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it eats the plants that grow on the hills" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

the hills provide

The term **hills** likely refers in this context to the higher ground on both sides of the river in which Behemoth lives. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "the higher ground on the sides of the river provides" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

and all of the beasts of the field play there

Yahweh means implicitly that the **beasts of the field** can **play** where Behemoth is feeding because it eats plants and so it will not harm them. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "and so it leaves the nearby beasts of the field peacefully alone" or "and so it does not harm any of the nearby beasts of the field" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 40:21

lotus trees

It is uncertain exactly what kind of **trees** Yahweh is describing here, although it is clear that they are a type that grows on riverbanks. You may wish to use a general expression in your translation. Alternate translation: “shade trees” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

the reed and the marsh

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **marsh** tells what kind of **reed** is in view. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use “and.” Alternate translation: “marsh reeds” or “the reeds of the marsh” (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 40:22

The lotus trees cover it {with} their shade

If you translated the term **lotus trees** as “shade trees” in the previous verse, you could translate this verse in such a way as to avoid using the term **shade** twice. Alternate translation: “Those trees cover it with their shade” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

the willows of the river

The term **willows** describes large trees that grow in damp ground. If your readers would not be familiar with what willow trees are, you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: “the trees that grow near the river” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 40:23

Behold, a river will overflow

Yahweh is using the word **Behold** to introduce a conditional statement, that is, to say how Behemoth would respond if a certain thing happened. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "Even if a river overflows" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.1157)**)

it does not tremble

Yahweh means implicitly that Behemoth does not **tremble** with fear when rivers flood. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "it does not tremble with fear" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

the Jordan

Yahweh is using one specific river, the **Jordan**, to mean any river in which Behemoth might be living. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the river in which it is living" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 40:24

Will one capture it with its eyes? Will one pierce {its} nose with cords

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "No one can capture it with its eyes! No one can pierce its nose with a cord!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will one capture it with its eyes

Yahweh is using the term **eyes** by association to mean sight. This could mean: (1) that no one can capture Behemoth while it still has the use of its eyes. Alternate translation: "No one can capture it while it is watching!" or "No one can capture it without first blinding it!" (2) that no one can capture Behemoth by using something that it would see. Alternate translation: "No one can capture it by putting attractive bait in front of it!" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Will one pierce {its} nose with cords

In this culture, people would control the movements of a large animal by passing a thin but strong cord or rope through a puncture in its nose. Yahweh is saying that no one could do this with Behemoth. Alternate translation: "No one would be able to control its movements by passing a cord through a hole in its nose!" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 41

Job 41 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

This chapter is the conclusion of Yahweh's response to Job.

The ULT sets the lines of this chapter farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because it is poetry.

Translation Issues in This Chapter

Leviathan

In the previous chapter, to help Job recognize what a small and insignificant place he occupied within creation, Yahweh told him to consider a great creature named Behemoth. In this chapter, for the same purpose, Yahweh tells Job to consider another great creature that he calls Leviathan.

As the General Introduction to Job explains, ancient peoples seem to have been aware of a large, fierce creature that lived in the ocean, which they called the "sea monster." They also used the names Leviathan and Rahab to describe this creature. While it seems to have been known in the time of Job, its exact identity is uncertain today. And so it may be best to use the name Leviathan in your translation, spelling it the way it sounds in your language, rather than trying to specify a particular animal that Yahweh is describing. The UST models this approach.

Yahweh answering Job with his own words

In several places in this chapter, Yahweh alludes to Job's opening speech, in which Job cursed the day of his birth, by using the same language that Job did. In verse 10, Yahweh speaks of awakening Leviathan, as Job did in [3:8](#). In verse 18, Yahweh speaks of "the eyelids of the dawn," meaning the first rays of the rising sun, as Job did in [3:9](#). In verse 30, Yahweh speaks of a "shard," a piece of broken pottery, such as Job took to scrape his skin, as [2:8](#) describes. In each case, these are the only two occurrences of these words or phrases in the book. As Yahweh concludes his own speech, he is going all the way back to the beginnings of Job's troubles and to the first concerns that he expressed in order to address everything that Job has said throughout the book. To help your readers appreciate what Yahweh is doing, you may wish to translate his expressions in these places in the same way that you translated Job's similar expressions earlier.

Job 41:1

Will you draw out Leviathan with a hook? Or will you tie its tongue with a rope

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You cannot draw out Leviathan with a hook! No, you cannot tie its tongue with a rope!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Will you draw out Leviathan

Yahweh now wants Job to consider another one of his great creatures, Leviathan. But he does not indicate this by saying, as he did for Behemoth in 40:15, "Now behold Leviathan." Instead, he describes how difficult it would be to capture Leviathan, following upon his description of how difficult it would be to capture Behemoth. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use a natural way in your language to show that here Yahweh is introducing another creature that he wants Job to consider. The UST models this approach. Alternate translation: "Now I want you to consider another of my great creatures. Will you draw out Leviathan" (See: **Introduction of New and Old Participants (p.1218)**)

Will you draw out Leviathan

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Will you draw Leviathan out of the water" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Leviathan

See how you translated the name **Leviathan** in 3:8. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

will you tie its tongue

Yahweh is using one part of Leviathan's mouth, its **tongue**, to mean its entire mouth. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "will you tie its mouth shut" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 41:2

Will you put a rope into its nose, or will you pierce its jaw with a hook

Since someone would first have to capture Leviathan with a **hook** before restraining it with a **rope** in its **nose**, it may be more natural to put the information about the hook first. Alternate translation: "Will you capture it by hooking its jaw and then put a rope into its nose to restrain it?" (See: **Information Structure (p.1213)**)

Will you put a rope into its nose

See how you translated the similar expression in [40:24](#). Alternate translation: "Will you control its movements by passing a rope through a hole in its nose" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 41:3

Will it multiply supplications to you? If it will speak tender {things} to you

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "It would not multiply supplications to you! It would not speak tender things to you!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p. 1281)**)

Will it multiply supplications to you? If it will speak tender {things} to you

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan could talk intelligently. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If it could speak, it would not multiply supplications to you! If it could talk, it would not say tender things to you!" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Will it multiply supplications to you

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **supplications**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "It would not keep begging you to release it!" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

If it will speak tender {things} to you

Yahweh is using the word **If** to introduce a question that anticipates a negative answer. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could indicate this in your translation. Alternate translation: "It would not speak tender things to you, would it?" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

If it will speak tender {things} to you

Yahweh is using the adjective **tender** as a noun to mean a certain kind of saying. The ULT adds the word **things** to show that. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "It would not speak politely to you, would it" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p. 1246)**)

Job 41:4

Will it cut a covenant with you? Will you take it for a servant forever

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "It would not cut a covenant with you! You could not take it for a servant forever!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will it cut a covenant with you

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan could intelligently make legal arrangements. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "If it could cut covenants, it would not cut one with you!" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Will it cut a covenant

See how you translated the expression "cut a covenant" in [31:1](#). Alternate translation: "Will it make a covenant" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

forever

The word translated **forever** does not mean for eternity. It describes an indefinite future period. In this context, it describes becoming a **servant** without any specified term of service, that is, for life. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "for the rest of its life" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 41:5

Will you play with it as {with} a bird? Or will you tie it for your girls

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You could not play with it as with a bird! No, you could not tie it for your girls!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

as {with} a bird

In this culture, a person might keep a **bird** as a pet. If someone in your culture would not do that, you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "as with a pet" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Or will you tie it

In this context, the word **tie** probably refers to putting a leash on an animal. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Or will you put a leash on it" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 41:6

Will partners bargain over it? Will they divide it among merchants

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "Partners will not bargain over it! They will not divide it among merchants!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

Will partners bargain over it? Will they divide it among merchants

The word **partners** refers to fishermen working together. If they made a large catch, they would **bargain** over how much of it belonged to each of them. The word **merchants** refers to people who would buy the catch in order to resell it to their customers. The fishermen would be able to **divide** Leviathan among several merchants because it would be such a large catch. You could indicate these things in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. The UST models one way to do that. (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Job 41:7

Can you fill its hide with harpoons or its head with spears of fish

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: "You cannot fill its hide with harpoons or its head with spears of fish!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

or & with spears of fish

Yahweh is using this possessive form to describe **spears** that are used to **catch** fish, not spears that are made of fish. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "or ... with fishing spears" (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Job 41:8

Put your hand on it; remember the battle; do not continue

Yahweh is actually making a conditional statement here. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: "If you ever put your hand on it, you will always remember the battle you fought with it, and you will never do that again!" (See: **Connect — Hypothetical Conditions (p.1157)**)

Put your hand on it

Here, **hand** represents power. If it would be helpful in your language, you could use an equivalent expression or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Use force against it" or "Try to fight with it" (See: **Metonymy (p. 1244)**)

Job 41:9**his hope**

Yahweh is using this possessive form to describe the **hope** of anyone who wants to capture Leviathan. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “the hope of anyone who wants to capture Leviathan” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

is deceived

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “is deceptive” or “is false” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

is one {not} cast down even at its appearance

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “one is cast down even at its appearance!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

is one {not} cast down even at its appearance

This question anticipates a positive answer. If you decide to retain the question form in your translation, you may need to make the question negative, as the ULT does, in order to indicate that. (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

is one {not} cast down even at its appearance

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: “does not one fall over even at its appearance” (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

is one {not} cast down even at its appearance

When Yahweh says that the mere **appearance** of Leviathan is enough to knock a person over, this is an overstatement for emphasis. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “is not its mere appearance overwhelmingly terrifying” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 41:10

he will awaken it

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan were literally asleep and someone might **awaken** it. He is referring to disturbing or attacking Leviathan when it is not acting hostilely. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “he will disturb it” or “he will attack it” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Then who {is} he {who} will stand to my face

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: “Then surely no one will stand to my face!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

who} will stand to my face

Here the word **face** represents what is directly in front of Yahweh. Yahweh is referring to someone coming directly in front of him to attack him. Alternate translation: “who would attack me” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 41:11

Who has anticipated me and I shall repay

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "No one has anticipated me, that I should repay!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

has anticipated me

The word translated **anticipated** means to arrive somewhere before someone else, but it has the implication of making arrangements to help that other person when he arrives. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "has helped me" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

Beneath all of the skies, it {is} to me

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "Everything under the whole sky belongs to me" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

Job 41:12

I will not keep silent {about} its limbs or the matter of its strengths or the beauty of its form

Yahweh is expressing a positive meaning by using a negative word together with a word that is the opposite of his intended meaning. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I will certainly speak about its limbs and the matter of its strengths and the beauty of its form" (See: **Litotes (p.1232)**)

its strengths

Yahweh is using the plural form **strengths** in a context where the singular term "strength" would suffice. This suggests that he is using the plural form for emphasis. Your language may use plural forms in the same way. If not, you could express the meaning in another way. Alternate translation: "its great strength" (See: **Unusual Uses of the Plural (p.1299)**)

Job 41:13

Who has removed the face of its clothing? Into the double of its bridle, who has entered

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate these questions as statements or as exclamations. Alternate translation: “No one has removed the face of its clothing! No one has entered into the double of its bridle!” (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

the face of its clothing

Yahweh is speaking as if the tough skin or hide of Leviathan were its **clothing**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “the face of its hide” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

the face of its clothing

Yahweh is using the term **face** in a specific sense to mean “surface.” By the surface of Leviathan’s hide, he means the scales that he describes in verses 15–17. Alternate translation: “the scales on its hide” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Into the double of its bridle

Yahweh is using this possessive form to describe a **bridle** that is characterized by being **double**. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Into its double bridle” (See: **Possession (p.1261)**)

Into the double of its bridle

The term **bridle** describes a type of headgear that people put on animals in order to control them. It consists of a bit that goes into the animal’s mouth and a series of straps that a rider can use to apply pressure to the bit. If your readers would not be familiar with what a bridle is, you could use a general expression in your translation. Alternate translation: “Into its double controlling mouthpiece” (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Into the double of its bridle

As the next verse suggests, Yahweh is using the term **bridle** by association to mean the mouth of Leviathan and specifically its jaws, since the term **double** indicates that he is referring to something paired. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “Into its double jaws” (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 41:14

The doors of its face, who has opened

Yahweh is using the question form for emphasis. If a speaker of your language would not use the question form for that purpose, you could translate this as a statement or as an exclamation. Alternate translation: "No one has opened the doors of its face!" (See: **Rhetorical Question (p.1281)**)

The doors of its face

Yahweh is speaking as if the jaws of Leviathan were literally **doors** in its **face**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Its jaws" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Around its teeth {is} terror

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **terror**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "Its teeth are terrifying" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 41:15

shields

Yahweh is speaking as if the scales of Leviathan were literally **shields**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "scales" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

are its} pride

Yahweh is speaking of Leviathan as if it were a living thing that could take **pride** in its scales. He means that it could be confident in their protection. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "are its protection" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

shut together {with} a tight seal

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. It may be helpful to begin a new sentence here. Alternate translation: "A tight seal shuts them together" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

shut together {with} a tight seal

Yahweh is speaking as if a **tight seal** literally held the scales of Leviathan closely to one another. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: "They overlap closely, as if a seal held them together" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 41:16

and air does not come between them

As an overstatement for emphasis, Yahweh says that not even **air** comes **between** the scales of Leviathan. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express the emphasis in a different way. Alternate translation: “and there is no space at all between them” (See: **Hyperbole (p.1200)**)

Job 41:17

A man with his brother, they are joined together

Yahweh is speaking as if a scale were literally a **man** and the scale next to it were literally his **brother**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Each scale is joined together with the scale next to it" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

A man with his brother, they are joined together

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "Each scale closely adjoins the scale next to it" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

they clasp themselves and they do not separate themselves

Yahweh is speaking of the scales of Leviathan as if they were living things that could **clasp themselves** together and potentially **separate themselves** (although they do not). If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "they overlap, with no separation between them" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 41:18

and its eyes {are} like the eyelids of the dawn

See how you translated the expression **the eyelids of the dawn** in [3:9](#). Alternate translation: “and its eyes are like the first flashes of light from the sunrise” (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 41:19

Flames come from its mouth

In a context such as this, your language might say "go" instead of **come**. Alternate translation: "Flames go out of its mouth" (See: **Go and Come (p.1191)**)

sparks of fire leap out

Yahweh is speaking of **sparks of fire** as if they were living things that could **leap out** of the mouth of Leviathan on their own. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it sends out sparks of fire" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 41:20

like a blown pot and a reed

Yahweh is using the term **blown** by association to mean a fire that someone has blown or fanned to make it burn hot. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "like a pot over a blown fire and a reed" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

like a blown pot and a reed

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "like a pot over a fire that someone has blown and a reed" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

like a blown pot and a reed

This phrase expresses a single idea by using two words connected with **and**. The word **reed** tells what kind of fuel the fire is burning that is heating the **pot**. People would make a fire out of dried reeds if they wanted it to burn hot quickly, although for a short time, such as to boil water. If it would be more natural in your language, you could express this meaning with an equivalent phrase that does not use "and." Alternate translation: "like a pot that is boiling over a hot fire" (See: **Hendiadys (p.1193)**)

Job 41:21

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 41:22

Strength lodges in its neck

Yahweh is speaking as if **strength** were a living thing that could stay for the night in the **neck** of Leviathan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It has a very strong neck" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

fear leaps up

Yahweh is speaking of **fear** as if it were a living thing that could leap up in front of Leviathan. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "people become very afraid" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and & to its face

Here the word **face** represents the presence of a person by association with the way people can see the face of someone who is present. Alternate translation: "in its presence" or "and ... in front of it" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

Job 41:23

The folds of its flesh join together; they are firm on it, they will not be moved

Yahweh is referring to the underbelly of Leviathan as the **folds of its flesh**. In most animals, this area is soft and vulnerable, but in Leviathan it is tight and secure. You could indicate the meaning of this expression in your translation if that would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "Its underbelly parts are tight and secure" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

they are firm on it, they will not be moved

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "they stay firmly in place" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 41:24

Its heart is hard like stone; yes, it is hard like a lower millstone

Here the word **heart** could mean: (1) the disposition of Leviathan. If that were **hard**, then Yahweh would be saying that Leviathan acted cruelly and was not afraid of anyone or anything. Alternate translation: "It acts cruelly and fears nothing" (2) the chest of Leviathan. Alternate translation: "Its chest is hard like stone; yes, it is hard like a lower millstone" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

like a lower millstone

A millstone is one of a pair of large, flat, round stones that people use to crush kernels of grain to process them into food for humans. The **lower millstone** needs to be especially strong and hard because it bears the weight of the upper millstone and the force of the crushing. If your readers would not be familiar with what a millstone is, in your translation you could use the name of a comparable object in your culture or you could use a general expression. Alternate translation: "like a stone that people use to crush grain" (See: **Translate Unknowns (p.1296)**)

Job 41:25

the mighty

Yahweh is using the adjective **mighty** as a noun to mean a certain kind of person. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. Alternate translation: "mighty people" or "even brave warriors" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Job 41:26

The sword reaching it does not stand

Yahweh is using the term **stand** in a specific sense to mean “succeed.” Alternate translation: “Someone may strike it with a sword, but that will have no effect” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the spear, the dart, the javelin

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: “neither does the spear, the dart, the javelin” (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

the spear, the dart, the javelin

Yahweh is not referring to a specific **spear, dart, or javelin**. He means any such weapon. Alternate translation: “neither does any spear, dart, or javelin that may strike it” (See: **Generic Noun Phrases (p.1189)**)

Job 41:27

It regards iron as straw, bronze as rotten wood

Yahweh is leaving out some of the words that in many languages a sentence would need in order to be complete. You can supply these words from the context if that would be clearer in your language. Alternate translation: "It regards iron as straw, and it regards bronze as rotten wood" (See: **Ellipsis (p.1174)**)

It regards iron as straw, bronze as rotten wood

The point of this comparison is that just as straw is flimsy and rotten wood falls apart, so Leviathan considers iron to be flimsy and bronze to be a substance that would fall apart. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "It considers iron to be as flimsy as straw, and it regards bronze as something that would fall apart like rotten wood" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

It regards iron as straw, bronze as rotten wood

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan could intelligently make judgments about the strength of metals that might be used to make weapons that people would use against it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "An iron weapon that someone might use against it would be as flimsy as straw, and a bronze weapon that someone might use against it would fall apart" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 41:28

The son of the bow

Yahweh is speaking as if an arrow were literally the **son** of the **bow** from which it was shot. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "An arrow" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

with it, the stones of the sling are turned into chaff

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "with it, the stones of the sling become chaff" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

with it, the stones of the sling are turned into chaff

Yahweh is speaking as if **stones** slung at Leviathan from a sling would literally become **chaff**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "stones slung at it do not hurt it any more than chaff would" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 41:29

Clubs are regarded as chaff

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "It regards clubs as chaff" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Clubs are regarded as chaff

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan could intelligently make judgments about the strength of weapons that people might use against it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It senses no more danger from a club than it would from chaff" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

and it laughs at the rattling of a spear

Yahweh is speaking of Leviathan as if it would laugh in derision if someone threatened it by shaking a spear at it. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "and it scorns the threat of a spear" (See: **Personification (p.1253)**)

Job 41:30

Beneath it are points of a shard

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan literally had **points of a shard** underneath it, sharp pieces of broken pottery. This is a poetic reference to the sharp scales that are on its underbelly. If it would be clearer in your language, you could express this as a comparison. Alternate translation: "It has pointed scales on its underbelly that are as sharp as pieces of broken pottery" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it spreads {like} a threshing sledge upon the mud

The point of this comparison could be that: (1) Leviathan spreads a trail through the mud the way a threshing sledge would leave a trail of separated grain on a threshing floor. Alternate translation: "it tears up the mud as it moves along, leaving a distinct trail as a threshing sledge does" (2) that Leviathan spreads itself out heavily in the mud. Alternate translation: "it spreads itself heavily, like a threshing sledge, upon the mud" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 41:31

It makes the deep boil like a pot

Yahweh is using the term **pot** by association to mean the water in a pot that someone was heating to make the water boil. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It makes the deep boil like the water in a pot that someone is heating" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

It makes the deep boil like a pot

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan literally made the ocean **boil** the way the water in a **pot** would boil. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It churns up the waters of the ocean as it swims" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

it makes the sea like an ointment pot

Yahweh is using the term **ointment pot** by association to mean the ointment in a pot that someone would stir to mix its ingredients together. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it makes the sea like ointment that someone is stirring in a pot" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

it makes the sea like an ointment pot

The point of this comparison is that that when Leviathan swims through the **sea**, it makes the waters foam the way ointment foams in a pot when its ingredients are stirred together. If it would be helpful in your language, you could make this point explicitly. Alternate translation: "it makes the waters of the sea foam the way ointment foams when someone stirs it in a pot" (See: **Simile (p.1287)**)

Job 41:32

It makes a path shine behind it

Yahweh is speaking as if the wake that Leviathan leaves in the water were literally a **path**. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "It leaves a shining wake behind it in the water" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

one considers the deep {to be} white-haired

Yahweh is speaking as if people would actually consider the **deep** to be **white-haired** when they saw the wake that Leviathan left. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "this makes the deep appear as if it had white hair" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 41:33

Upon the dust

Yahweh is using one part of the earth, the **dust** on its surface, to mean the earth itself. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "On earth" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

the one made without fear

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "the one that I made without fear" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 41:34

It sees all of the high

Yahweh is using the adjective **high** as a noun to mean a certain kind of thing. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate this adjective with an equivalent phrase. In this context, it indicates strength or power, not simply great height. Alternate translation: "It sees everything that is powerful" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

It sees all of the high

Yahweh is using the term **see** in a specific sense. It could mean: (1) that Leviathan can look directly at any powerful creature without being fearful or intimidated. Alternate translation: "It can look at any powerful thing without becoming afraid" (2) that Leviathan looks down disdainfully at all other powerful creatures. Alternate translation: "It disdains all other powerful things" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

it {is} king over all of the sons of pride

In this context, the expression **sons of** describes something that shares the qualities of something else. Yahweh is using this expression to describe the behavior and character of certain creatures. While they do not literally feel **pride** as people would, they act as if they are superior to other creatures, for example, by not staying out of their way. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could use an equivalent expression from your language or state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "it is king over all the dangerous animals" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

it {is} king over all of the sons of pride

Yahweh is speaking as if Leviathan were literally a **king**. He means that no other animal can challenge Leviathan. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "no other dangerous animal can challenge it" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 42

Job 42 General Notes

Structure and Formatting

The ULT sets the lines of verses 1–6 farther to the right on the page than the rest of the text because they are poetry.

- Verses 1–6: Job acknowledges that he did not have the knowledge and wisdom to challenge Yahweh's government of the universe.
- Verses 7–17: The author describes how Yahweh restored Job's health and prosperity and gave him a long life.

Special concepts in This chapter

Job's repentance

This chapter describes how Yahweh blessed Job with health, prosperity, and a long life after he repented. However, Yahweh's blessing was not dependent upon Job's repentance. It was dependent upon Yahweh's grace. (See: [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/justice\]\]](#), [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/restore\]\]](#), [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/bless\]\]](#) and [\[\[rc:///tw/dict/bible/kt/repent\]\]](#) and **grace, gracious (p.1310)**)

Job 42:1

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 42:2

and no plan is withheld from you

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "and no one can thwart any of your plans" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

Job 42:3

Who is this, concealing counsel without knowledge

In the first sentence in this verse, Job is quoting what Yahweh said in [38:2](#), at the beginning of his speech. The ULT indicates this by putting the sentence in second-level quotation marks. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “You asked who this was who was concealing counsel without knowledge.” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Therefore

Job is using the word **Therefore** to introduce a conclusion that he has reached on the basis of what Yahweh said in his entire speech. Job is not using the word to introduce the reason why he has spoken without understanding. It may be helpful to clarify this for your readers. Alternate translation: “Based on everything you have said, I now recognize that” (See: **Connect — Reason-and-Result Relationship (p.1159)**)

Job 42:4

Listen, now, and I will speak; I will question you, and you will inform me

In this verse, Job is once again quoting what Yahweh said in his speech. In [38:3](#) and [40:7](#), Yahweh said, “I will question you, and you will inform me.” Since Job had said in [13:22](#) that he could choose either to ask questions first or to listen to questions first, by saying that he would question Job, Yahweh was implicitly telling Job to listen, as Job indicates in the first part of this verse. The ULT indicates that Job is quoting Yahweh by putting this verse in second-level quotation marks. If it would be clearer in your language, you could translate this so that there is not a quotation within a quotation. Alternate translation: “You told me to listen and you would speak; you said that you would question me and I would inform you” (See: **Quotes within Quotes (p.1277)**)

Job 42:5

With the hearing of my ear I had heard {about} you, but now my eye sees you

Job is using one part of himself, his **ear**, to mean all of him in the act of hearing. He is using one part of himself, his **eye**, to mean all of him in the act of seeing. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "Before this I had only heard about you, but now I have seen you for myself" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

Job 42:6

I despise

By the word **despise**, Job does not mean that he hates something. He means that he thinks little of something. He could mean: (1) that he thinks little of himself, that is, he no longer believes that he can credibly declare whether God is treating anyone fairly or unfairly. Alternate translation: "I no longer believe that I understand as much as I thought I did" (2) that he now thinks little of what he said in all of his speeches. Alternate translation: "I recognize that what I said was wrong" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in dust and ashes

In this culture, people would sprinkle **dust and ashes** on themselves as a symbolic action to show that they were greatly distressed. This is what Job's friends were doing in 2:12 when they threw dust into the air so that it would land on their heads. Job was doing something similar in 2:8 when he sat down in a pile of ashes. Job could be sprinkling dust and ashes from the pile on himself as he speaks these words, or he could be speaking as if he were doing that in order to describe how sincerely he is repenting. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "by sprinkling dust and ashes on myself to show how distressed I am by what I did" or "very sincerely, as if I were sprinkling dust and ashes on myself to show how distressed I am by what I did" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

Job 42:7

And it happened

The author is using the phrase translated **And it happened** to introduce a new event in the story. Use a word, phrase, or other method in your language that is natural for introducing a new event. (See: **Introduction of a New Event (p.1215)**)

had spoken these words

The author is using the term **words** to mean what Yahweh said to Job by using words. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "had said these things" (See: **Metonymy (p.1244)**)

My nose burns against you and against the two of your friends

Yahweh is speaking as if his **nose**, meaning his anger, were literally burning. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "I am feeling great anger against you and your two friends" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

Job 42:8

I will surely lift his face

See how you translated the similar expression in [13:8](#). Alternate translation: "I will surely show favor to him" or "I will surely answer his prayer for you" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

lest I deal with you {according to your} folly

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **folly**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "lest I punish you for the foolish things you have said about me" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 42:9

and Yahweh lifted the face of Job

See how you translated the similar expression in the previous verse. Alternate translation: “and Yahweh showed favor to Job” or “and Yahweh answered Job’s prayer for his three friends” (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 42:10

And Yahweh turned the captivity of Job

The author is speaking as if Job's troubles had been holding him in **captivity**. The expression **turned the captivity** means that Yahweh ended this captivity. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "And Yahweh restored Job to his former prosperity" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

and Yahweh added {to} all that {was} to Job to double

If your language does not use an abstract noun for the idea of **double**, you could express the same idea in another way. Alternate translation: "and Yahweh gave Job two times as much as he previously had" (See: **Abstract Nouns (p.1134)**)

Job 42:11

and they ate bread with him in his house

Eating a meal with Job in his home was a symbolic action that acknowledged Job's restored place in the community. Job had complained in 30:10 about how people were staying away from him a symbolic action that conveyed disrespect and disapproval. Job's family and friends were now showing respect and approval. If it would be helpful to your readers, you could explain the significance of this action. Alternate translation: "and they ate bread with him in his house to show their respect for him and their approval of him" (See: **Symbolic Action (p.1292)**)

bread

The author is using one kind of food, **bread**, to mean food in general. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "a meal" (See: **Synecdoche (p.1294)**)

And they consoled him and comforted him

The terms **consoled** and **comforted** mean similar things. The author is using the two terms together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Alternate translation: "And they offered him much sympathy" (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)

the troubles that Yahweh had brought

The author is speaking as if **troubles** were an object that Yahweh could have brought to Job and put on top of him. If it would be clearer in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: "the troubles that Yahweh had caused him to experience" (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

one kesitah

A **kesitah** was a piece of silver of a certain weight that had not been minted into a coin. Its exact value is uncertain. You may wish to translate the term **kesitah** with a general expression. Alternate translation: "a piece of silver" (See: **Biblical Money (p.1150)**)

Job 42:12

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 42:13

(There are no notes for this verse.)

Job 42:14

And he called the name of the first Jemimah and the name of the second Keziah and the name of the third Keren-Happuch

The expression **called the name** is the way people in this culture spoke of giving a child a name when the child was born. Alternate translation: "He gave the first the name Jemimah, and he gave the second the name Keziah, and he gave the third the name Keren-Happuch." (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

the first & the second & the third

The author is using the adjectives **first**, **second** and **third** as nouns to refer to specific individuals. Your language may use adjectives in the same way. If not, you can translate these words with equivalent phrases. Alternate translation: "his first daughter ... his second daughter ... his third daughter" (See: **Nominal Adjectives (p.1246)**)

Jemimah & Keziah & Keren-Happuch

The words **Jemimah**, **Keziah**, and **Keren-Happuch** are the names of women. (See: **How to Translate Names (p.1196)**)

Job 42:15

And one was not found {among} women

If your language does not use this passive form, you could express the idea in active form or in another way that is natural in your language. Alternate translation: "And there were no other women" (See: **Active or Passive (p.1136)**)

And their father gave an inheritance to them in the midst of their brothers

It was not customary in this culture for fathers to give their daughters an inheritance. The author may mention this because it shows the special love and regard that Job had for his daughters. You could indicate that in your translation if it would be helpful to your readers. Alternate translation: "And their father loved them so much and regarded them so highly that he gave them an inheritance in the midst of their brothers" (See: **Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (p.1143)**)

in the midst of their brothers

This expression could mean: (1) that Job gave his daughters an inheritance just as he did for his sons. Alternate translation: "just as he did for their brothers" (2) that Job gave his daughters as an inheritance land that was located in the same area as land that he gave to his sons as their inheritance. Alternate translation: "of land that adjoined land that he left to his sons" (See: **Idiom (p.1207)**)

Job 42:16

his sons and the sons of his sons, {to} four generations

In this culture, Job's generation was considered the first generation, so **four generations** refers to his children's children's children. Your language may have terms of its own for these kinship relationships. Alternate translation: "his children and his grandchildren and his great-grandchildren" (See: **Kinship (p.1228)**)

Job 42:17

old and full of days

The author is speaking as if **days** were an object and as if Job were a container that was **full** of them. If it would be helpful in your language, you could state the meaning plainly. Alternate translation: “old and having lived for many days” (See: **Metaphor (p.1238)**)

old and full of days

The expressions **old** and **full of days** mean similar things. The author is using them together for emphasis. If it would be clearer for your readers, you could express the emphasis with a single phrase. Your language may have a characteristic expression that it would use in such a context. Alternate translation: “at a ripe old age” (See: **Doublet (p.1172)**)



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Abstract Nouns

Description

Abstract nouns are nouns that refer to attitudes, qualities, events, or situations. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as happiness, weight, unity, friendship, health, and reason. This is a translation issue because some languages may express a certain idea with an abstract noun, while others would need a different way to express it.

This page answers the question: *What are abstract nouns and how do I deal with them in my translation?*

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

[Parts of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Sentence Structure \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Remember that nouns are words that refer to a person, place, thing, or idea. Abstract nouns are the nouns that refer to ideas. These can be attitudes, qualities, events, situations, or even relationships between those ideas. These are things that cannot be seen or touched in a physical sense, such as joy, peace, creation, goodness, contentment, justice, truth, freedom, vengeance, slowness, length, weight, and many, many more.

Some languages, such as Biblical Greek and English, use abstract nouns a lot. They provide a way of giving names to actions or qualities. With names, people who speak these languages can talk about the concepts as though they were things. For example, in languages that use abstract nouns, people can say, "I believe in the forgiveness of sin." But some languages do not use abstract nouns very much. In these languages, speakers may not have the two abstract nouns "forgiveness" and "sin," but they would express the same meaning in other ways. For example, they would express, "I believe that God is willing to forgive people after they have sinned," by using verb phrases instead of nouns for those ideas.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

The Bible that you translate from may use abstract nouns to express certain ideas. Your language might not use abstract nouns for some of those ideas. Instead, it might use phrases to express those ideas. Those phrases will use other kinds of words such as adjectives, verbs, or adverbs to express the meaning of the abstract noun. For example, "What is its **weight**?" could be expressed as "How much does it **weigh**?" or "How **heavy** is it?"

Examples From the Bible

From **childhood** you have known the sacred writings ... (2 Timothy 3:15a ULT)

The abstract noun "childhood" refers to when someone was a child.

But **godliness** with **contentment** is great **gain**. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULT)

The abstract nouns "godliness" and "contentment" refer to being godly and content. The abstract noun "gain" refers to something that benefits or helps someone.

Today **salvation** has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9 ULT)

The abstract noun "salvation" here refers to being saved.

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider **slowness** to be (2 Peter 3:9a ULT)

The abstract noun "slowness" refers to the lack of speed with which something is done.

He will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the **purposes** of the heart. (1 Corinthians 4:5b ULT)

The abstract noun "purposes" refers to the things that people want to do and the reasons they want to do them.

Translation Strategies

If an abstract noun would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here is another option:

(1) Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Reword the sentence with a phrase that expresses the meaning of the abstract noun. Instead of a noun, the new phrase will use a verb, an adverb, or an adjective to express the idea of the abstract noun. Alternative translations are indented below the Scripture example.

... from **childhood** you have known the sacred writings ... (2 Timothy 3:15a ULT)

Ever since **you were a child** you have known the sacred writings.

But **godliness** with **contentment** is great **gain**. (1 Timothy 6:6 ULT)

But **being godly** and **content** is very **beneficial**. But we **benefit** greatly when we **are godly** and **content**. But we **benefit** greatly when we **honor and obey God** and when we are **happy with what we have**.

Today **salvation** has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. (Luke 19:9 ULT)

Today the people in this house **have been saved** ... Today God **has saved** the people in this house ...

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider **slowness** to be. (2 Peter 3:9a ULT)

The Lord does not move slowly concerning his promises, as some consider **moving slowly** to be.

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the **purposes** of the heart. (1 Corinthians 4:5b ULT)

He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal **the things that people want to do and the reasons that they want to do them**.

"

Referenced in: Job 2:3; Job 3:5; Job 3:10; Job 4:21; Job 5:2; Job 5:4; Job 5:11; Job 5:21; Job 5:22; Job 5:24; Job 6:10; Job 6:13; Job 6:25; Job 6:29; Job 6:30; Job 7:1; Job 7:3; Job 7:6; Job 7:7; Job 7:11; Job 8:3; Job 8:12; Job 8:13; Job 8:14; Job 9:18; Job 9:23; Job 10:12; Job 11:7; Job 11:11; Job 11:14; Job 11:18; Job 12:12; Job 12:13; Job 12:16; Job 13:5; Job 13:16; Job 14:7; Job 14:14; Job 15:11; Job 15:31; Job 17:2; Job 17:15; Job 19:7; Job 19:10; Job 19:29; Job 20:12; Job 20:20; Job 21:9; Job 21:14; Job 21:23; Job 21:25; Job 21:28; Job 21:34; Job 22:15; Job 22:21; Job 22:23; Job 25:2; Job 27:4; Job 27:8; Job 28:4; Job 29:14; Job 30:15; Job 30:16; Job 31:3; Job 31:5; Job 31:6; Job 31:13; Job 31:24; Job 32:7; Job 32:9; Job 32:10; Job 32:17; Job 33:3; Job 33:24; Job 33:27; Job 33:33; Job 34:4; Job 34:6; Job 34:8; Job 34:24; Job 34:34; Job 34:35; Job 35:2; Job 35:13; Job 35:16; Job 36:3; Job 36:6; Job 36:10; Job 36:11; Job 36:12; Job 36:14; Job 36:15; Job 36:23; Job 37:13; Job 37:23; Job 38:2; Job 38:23; Job 39:6; Job 40:8; Job 41:3; Job 41:14; Job 42:8; Job 42:10

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: Job 1:2; Job 1:21; Job 3:3; Job 3:20; Job 3:23; Job 4:2; Job 4:7; Job 4:10; Job 4:11; Job 4:12; Job 4:20; Job 4:21; Job 5:7; Job 5:13; Job 5:21; Job 5:23; Job 6:2; Job 6:6; Job 6:13; Job 6:17; Job 6:20; Job 7:3; Job 8:17; Job 9:24; Job 10:19; Job 11:2; Job 11:12; Job 11:15; Job 12:5; Job 12:14; Job 12:20; Job 13:25; Job 14:1; Job 14:5; Job 14:7; Job 14:12; Job 14:17; Job 15:7; Job 15:14; Job 15:16; Job 15:19; Job 15:20; Job 15:22; Job 15:23; Job 15:32; Job 16:6; Job 17:1; Job 17:11; Job 18:3; Job 18:4; Job 18:10; Job 18:12; Job 18:14; Job 18:15; Job 19:7; Job 19:19; Job 19:23; Job 20:8; Job 20:26; Job 21:6; Job 21:8; Job 21:21; Job 21:24; Job 21:30; Job 21:32; Job 21:34; Job 22:8; Job 22:9; Job 22:16; Job 22:20; Job 22:23; Job 22:30; Job 23:17; Job 24:1; Job 24:4; Job 24:20; Job 24:23; Job 24:24; Job 25:4; Job 26:8; Job 28:2; Job 28:5; Job 28:12; Job 28:13; Job 28:15; Job 28:16; Job 28:18; Job 28:19; Job 28:21; Job 29:6; Job 29:10; Job 29:12; Job 30:5; Job 30:7; Job 30:8; Job 30:15; Job 30:27; Job 31:9; Job 31:22; Job 33:6; Job 33:19; Job 33:21; Job 33:30; Job 34:20; Job 34:22; Job 34:25; Job 34:28; Job 34:36; Job 36:6; Job 36:8; Job 37:4; Job 37:10; Job 37:18; Job 37:20; Job 38:13; Job 38:14; Job 38:15; Job 38:17; Job 38:21; Job 38:24; Job 40:17; Job 41:9; Job 41:15; Job 41:17; Job 41:20; Job 41:23; Job 41:28; Job 41:29; Job 41:33; Job 42:2; Job 42:15

Apostrophe

Description

An apostrophe is a figure of speech in which a speaker turns his attention away from his listeners and speaks to someone or something that he knows cannot hear him. He does this to tell his listeners his message or feelings about that person or thing in a very strong way.

This page answers the question: *What is the figure of speech called an apostrophe?*

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

Figures of Speech (UTA PDF)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Many languages do not use apostrophe, and readers could be confused by it. They may wonder who the speaker is talking to, or think that the speaker is crazy to talk to things or people who cannot hear.

Examples from the Bible

Mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on you. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

King Saul was killed on Mount Gilboa, and David sang a sad song about it. By telling these mountains that he wanted them to have no dew or rain, he showed how sad he was.

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those sent to you. (Luke 13:34a ULT)

Jesus was expressing his feelings for the people of Jerusalem in front of his disciples and a group of Pharisees. By speaking directly to Jerusalem as though its people could hear him, Jesus showed how deeply he cared about them.

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

The man of God spoke as if the altar could hear him, but he really wanted the king, who was standing there, to hear him.

Translation Strategies

If apostrophe would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. But if this way of speaking would be confusing to your people, let the speaker continue speaking to the people that are listening to him as he tells **them** his message or feelings about the people or thing that cannot hear him. See the example below.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh: "**Altar, altar!** This is what Yahweh says, 'See, ... on you they will burn human bones.'" (1 Kings 13:2 ULT)

He said this about the altar: "This is what Yahweh says **about this altar**. 'See, ... they will burn people's bones on **it**.'"

Mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on **you**. (2 Samuel 1:21a ULT)

As for these mountains of Gilboa, let there not be dew or rain on **them**.

"

Referenced in: [Job 16:18](#); [Job 17:14](#); [Job 31:24](#); [Job 38:11](#)

Aside

Description

An aside is a figure of speech in which someone who is speaking to a person or group pauses to speak confidentially to himself or someone else about those to whom he had been speaking. The speaker does this to indicate in a strong way his thoughts or feelings about that person or group.

This page answers the question: *What is the figure of speech called an "aside"?*

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

Figures of Speech (UTA PDF)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Many languages do not use asides, and readers could be confused by them. They may wonder why the speaker suddenly starts talking to himself or someone else about the people he is speaking with.

Examples From the Bible

All the men of your covenant are sending you away as far as the border. The men of your peace are deceiving you and are prevailing against you. They of your bread will set a trap under you. **There is no understanding in him.** (Obadiah 1:7 ULT)

In the first three lines, Yahweh is telling the people of Edom what will happen to them because they did not help the people of Judah. In the fourth line, Yahweh says something about Edom to himself.

And I purified them from everything foreign. And I caused the service watches to stand: for the priests and for the Levites, a man in his work; and for the offering of pieces of wood at the appointed times; and for the firstfruits. **Remember me, my God, for good.** (Nehemiah 13:30-31 ULT)

Nehemiah is speaking to the readers of his account and describing some of the many things he did to restore true worship in Judah after the people returned from exile. But he suddenly turns aside and addresses God, asking God to bless him for what he, Nehemiah, has done for those people.

Translation Strategies

- (1) If an aside would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. But if this way of speaking would be confusing, let the speaker continue speaking to the people who are listening to him, but make clear that he is now expressing his thoughts and feelings about them.
- (2) If a person speaks a prayer to God as an aside, you can put the prayer in quotation marks to indicate that.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1)

All the men of your covenant are sending you away as far as the border. The men of your peace are deceiving you and are prevailing against you. They of your bread will set a trap under you. **There is no understanding in him.** (Obadiah 1:7 ULT)

All the men of your covenant are sending you away as far as the border. The men of your peace are deceiving you and are prevailing against you. They of your bread will set a trap under you. **You do not understand any of this.**

(2)

And I purified them from everything foreign. And I caused the service watches to stand: for the priests and for the Levites, a man in his work; 31 and for the offering of pieces of wood at the appointed times; and for the firstfruits. **Remember me, my God, for good.** (Nehemiah 13:30-31 ULT)

And I cleansed them from everything foreign, and I made assignments for the priests and for the Levites, a man to his own work. And the wood offering at the stated time, and the firstfruits. **“Remember me, my God, for good.”**

”

Referenced in: [Job 32:15](#)

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information

Assumed knowledge is whatever a speaker assumes his audience knows before he speaks and gives them some kind of information. The speaker does not give the audience this information because he believes that they already know it.

This page answers the question: *How can I be sure that my translation communicates the assumed knowledge and implicit information along with the explicit information of the original message?*

When the speaker does give the audience information, he can do so in two ways. The speaker gives explicit information in what he states directly. Implicit Information is what the speaker does not state directly because he expects his audience to be able to learn it from other things he says.

Description

When someone speaks or writes, he has something specific that he wants people to know or do or think about. He normally states this directly. This is explicit information.

The speaker assumes that his audience already knows certain things that they will need to think about in order to understand this information. Normally he does not tell people these things, because they already know them. This is called assumed knowledge.

The speaker does not always directly state everything that he expects his audience to learn from what he says. Implicit information is information that he expects people to learn from what he says even though he does not state it directly.

Often, the audience understands this implicit information by combining what they already know (assumed knowledge) with the explicit information that the speaker tells them directly.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

All three kinds of information are part of the speaker's message. If one of these kinds of information is missing, then the audience will not understand the message. Because the target translation is in a language that is very different from the biblical languages and is made for an audience that lives in a very different time and place than the people in the Bible, many times the assumed knowledge or the implicit information is missing from the message. In other words, modern readers do not know everything that the original speakers and hearers in the Bible knew. When these things are important for understanding the message, it is helpful if you include this information in the text or in a footnote.

Examples From the Bible

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

Jesus did not say what foxes and birds use holes and nests for, because he assumed that the scribe would have known that foxes sleep in holes in the ground and birds sleep in their nests. This is **assumed knowledge**.

Jesus did not directly say here "I am the Son of Man" but, if the scribe did not already know it, then that fact would be **implicit information** that he could learn because Jesus referred to himself that way. Also, Jesus did not state explicitly that he travelled a lot and did not have a house that he slept in every night. That is **implicit information** that the scribe could learn when Jesus said that he had nowhere to lay his head.

Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the mighty deeds had been done in **Tyre and Sidon** which were done in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But

I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the **day of judgment** than for you.
(Matthew 11:21-22 ULT)

Jesus assumed that the people he was speaking to knew that Tyre and Sidon were very wicked, and that the day of judgment is a time when God will judge every person. Jesus also knew that the people he was talking to believed that they were good and did not need to repent. Jesus did not need to tell them these things. This is all **assumed knowledge**.

An important piece of **implicit information** here is that the people he was speaking to would be judged more severely than the people of Tyre and Sidon would be judged **because** they did not repent.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not wash their hands when they eat bread**. (Matthew 15:2 ULT)

One of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating. People thought that in order to be righteous, they had to follow all the traditions of the elders. This was **assumed knowledge** that the Pharisees who were speaking to Jesus expected him to know. By saying this, they were accusing his disciples of not following the traditions, and thus not being righteous. This is **implicit information** that they wanted him to understand from what they said.

Translation Strategies

If readers have enough assumed knowledge to be able to understand the message, along with any important implicit information that goes with the explicit information, then it is good to leave that knowledge unstated and leave the implicit information implicit. If the readers do not understand the message because one of these is missing for them, then follow these strategies:

- (1) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.
- (2) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not have certain assumed knowledge, then provide that knowledge as explicit information.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes**, and the birds of the sky **have nests**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:20 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the foxes slept in their holes and birds slept in their nests.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes **have holes to live in**, and the birds of the sky **have nests to live in**, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head and sleep."

It will be more tolerable for **Tyre and Sidon** at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that the people of Tyre and Sidon were very, very wicked. This can be stated explicitly.

At the day of judgment, it will be more tolerable for **those cities of Tyre and Sidon, whose people were very wicked**, than it will be for you. or At the day of judgment, It will be more tolerable for those **wicked cities, Tyre and Sidon**, than for you.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not wash their hands** when they eat bread. (Matthew 15:2 ULT)

The assumed knowledge was that one of the traditions of the elders was a ceremony in which people would wash their hands in order to be ritually clean before eating, which they must do to be righteous. It was not to remove germs from their hands to avoid sickness, as a modern reader might think.

Why do your disciples violate the traditions of the elders? For **they do not go through the ceremonial handwashing ritual of righteousness** when they eat bread.

(2) If readers cannot understand the message because they do not know certain implicit information, then state that information clearly, but try to do it in a way that does not imply that the information was new to the original audience.

Then a scribe came to him and said, "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head." (Matthew 8:19-20 ULT)

The implicit information is that Jesus himself is the Son of Man. Other implicit information is that if the scribe wanted to follow Jesus, then, like Jesus, he would have to live without a house.

Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the sky have nests, but **I, the Son of Man, have no home to rest in. If you want to follow me, you will live as I live.**"

It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment than for you (Matthew 11:22 ULT)

The implicit information is that God would not only judge the people; he would punish them. This can be made explicit.

At the day of judgment, God will **punish Tyre and Sidon**, cities whose people were very wicked, **less severely than he will punish you.** or: At the day of judgment, God will **punish you more severely** than Tyre and Sidon, cities whose people were very wicked.

Modern readers may not know some of the things that the people in the Bible and the people who first read it knew. This can make it hard for them to understand what a speaker or writer says, and to learn things that the speaker left implicit. Translators may need to state some things explicitly in the translation that the original speaker or writer left unstated or implicit.

Next we recommend you learn about: "
Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: Job 1 General Notes; Job 1:4; Job 1:6; Job 2:8; Job 2:9; Job 2:10; Job 2:12; Job 3:1; Job 3:5; Job 3:7; Job 3:8; Job 3:14; Job 3:16; Job 3:24; Job 4:2; Job 4:17; Job 4:18; Job 5:1; Job 5:2; Job 5:3; Job 5:4; Job 5:5; Job 5:6; Job 5:7; Job 5:9; Job 5:13; Job 5:22; Job 5:24; Job 6:10; Job 6:11; Job 6:14; Job 6:18; Job 6:21; Job 6:27; Job 7:4; Job 7:5; Job 7:8; Job 7:9; Job 7:12; Job 7:19; Job 7:21; Job 8:12; Job 9:3; Job 9:5; Job 9:6; Job 9:8; Job 9:13; Job 9:15; Job 9:20; Job 9:28; Job 9:29; Job 9:30; Job 9:31; Job 9:35; Job 10:2; Job 10:5; Job 10:6; Job 10:7; Job 10:12; Job 10:14; Job 10:16; Job 10:20; Job 11:3; Job 11:4; Job 11:6; Job 11:10; Job 11:11; Job 11:15; Job 11:18; Job 11:19; Job 12:7; Job 12:8; Job 12:9; Job 12:11; Job 12:12; Job 12:13; Job 12:16; Job 12:17; Job 12:18; Job 13:1; Job 13:8; Job 13:9; Job 13:20; Job 13:26; Job 14:6; Job 14:8; Job 14:9; Job 14:13; Job 14:14; Job 14:15; Job 14:20; Job 15:4; Job 15:7; Job 15:11; Job 15:15; Job 15:16; Job 15:19; Job 15:20; Job 15:21; Job 15:22; Job 15:27; Job 15:32; Job 16:13; Job 16:19; Job 17:2; Job 17:4; Job 17:6; Job 17:16; Job 18:4; Job 18:15; Job 19:4; Job 19:5; Job 19:16; Job 19:18; Job 19:23; Job 19:25; Job 19:26; Job 20:10; Job 20:18; Job 20:21; Job 20:23; Job 20:24; Job 20:26; Job 20:27; Job 21:6; Job 21:11; Job 21:12; Job 21:13; Job 21:19; Job

21:26; Job 21:27; Job 21:28; Job 21:29; Job 21:32; Job 22:4; Job 22:6; Job 22:12; Job 22:14; Job 22:16; Job 22:17; Job 22:19; Job 22:21; Job 22:27; Job 23:2; Job 23:7; Job 23:9; Job 23:12; Job 23:15; Job 24:1; Job 24:2; Job 24:3; Job 24:4; Job 24:7; Job 24:8; Job 24:9; Job 24:10; Job 24:11; Job 24:12; Job 24:13; Job 24:15; Job 24:16; Job 24:17; Job 24:24; Job 25:2; Job 25:5; Job 26:4; Job 26:5; Job 26:13; Job 26:14; Job 27:15; Job 27:21; Job 27:23; Job 28:3; Job 28:4; Job 28:5; Job 28:7; Job 28:12; Job 28:13; Job 28:25; Job 29:11; Job 29:16; Job 29:20; Job 30:1; Job 30:5; Job 30:9; Job 30:10; Job 30:12; Job 30:18; Job 30:20; Job 30:25; Job 30:28; Job 31:1; Job 31:8; Job 31:9; Job 31:14; Job 31:31; Job 31:35; Job 31:36; Job 32:1; Job 32:8; Job 32:9; Job 32:18; Job 32:20; Job 33:6; Job 33:12; Job 33:13; Job 33:15; Job 33:17; Job 33:22; Job 33:23; Job 33:24; Job 33:26; Job 33:27; Job 33:32; Job 34:3; Job 34:14; Job 34:15; Job 34:26; Job 35:5; Job 36:3; Job 36:14; Job 36:20; Job 36:22; Job 36:25; Job 36:27; Job 36:30; Job 36:31; Job 37:3; Job 37:5; Job 37:6; Job 37:7; Job 37:9; Job 37:10; Job 37:11; Job 37:13; Job 37:16; Job 37:17; Job 37:22; Job 37:23; Job 37:24; Job 38:4; Job 38:7; Job 38:10; Job 38:13; Job 38:14; Job 38:16; Job 38:18; Job 38:19; Job 38:21; Job 38:22; Job 38:29; Job 38:30; Job 38:34; Job 38:36; Job 38:40; Job 38:41; Job 39:1; Job 39:2; Job 39:10; Job 39:11; Job 39:12; Job 39:13; Job 39:24; Job 39:26; Job 40:5; Job 40:13; Job 40:14; Job 40:15; Job 40:20; Job 40:23; Job 40:24; Job 41:2; Job 41:4; Job 41:5; Job 41:6; Job 41:11; Job 41:23; Job 42:6; Job 42:15

Background Information

Description

When people tell a story, they normally tell the events in the order that they happened. This sequence of events makes up the storyline. The storyline is full of action verbs that move the story along in time. But sometimes a writer may take a break from the storyline and give some information to help his listeners understand the story better. This type of information is called background information. The background information might be about things that happened before the events he has already told about, or it might explain something in the story, or it might be about something that would happen much later in the story.

This page answers the question: *What is background information, and how can I show that some information is background information?*

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

[Order of Events \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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

Example — The bolded phrases in the story below are all background information.

Peter and John went on a hunting trip because **their village was going to have a feast the next day. Peter was the best hunter in the village. He once killed three wild pigs in one day!** They walked for hours through low bushes until they heard a wild pig. The pig ran, but they managed to shoot the pig and kill it. Then they tied up its legs with some rope **they had brought with them** and carried it home on a pole. When they brought it to the village, Peter's cousin saw the pig and realized that it was his own pig. Peter had mistakenly killed his cousin's pig.

Background information often tells about something that had happened earlier or something that would happen much later. Examples of these are: "their village was going to have a feast the next day," "He once killed three wild pigs in one day," and "that they had brought with them."

Often background information uses "be" verbs like "was" and "were," rather than action verbs. Examples of these are "their village was going to have a feast the next day," and "Peter **was** the best hunter in the village."

Background information can also be marked with words that tell the reader that this information is not part of the event line of the story. In this story, some of these words are "because," "once," and "had."

A writer may use background information:

- to help their listeners be interested in the story
- to help their listeners understand something in the story
- to help the listeners understand why something is important in the story
- to tell the setting of a story

- Setting includes:
 - where the story takes place
 - when the story takes place
 - who is present when the story begins
 - what is happening when the story begins

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Languages have different ways of marking background information and storyline information.
- You (the translator) need to know the order of the events in the Bible, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.
- You will need to translate the story in a way that marks the background information in a way that your own readers will understand the order of events, which information is background information, and which is storyline information.

Examples From the Bible

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael. Abram **was 86 years old** when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:15-16 ULT)

The first sentence tells about two events. Hagar gave birth and Abraham named his son. The second sentence is background information about how old Abram was when those things happened.

And Jesus himself **was beginning about 30 years old**. He **was the son** (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli, (Luke 3:23 ULT)

The verses before this tell about when Jesus was baptized. This sentence introduces background information about Jesus' age and ancestors. The story resumes in chapter 4 where it tells about Jesus going to the wilderness.

Then **it happened on a Sabbath** that he **was going through the grain fields**, and his disciples **were picking and eating the heads of grain, rubbing them in their hands**. But some of the Pharisees said ... (Luke 6:1-2a ULT)

These verses give the setting of the story. The events took place in a grain field on the Sabbath day. Jesus, his disciples, and some Pharisees were there, and Jesus' disciples were picking heads of grain and eating them. The main action in the story starts with the phrase, "But some of the Pharisees said"

Translation Strategies

To keep translations clear and natural you will need to study how people tell stories in your language. Observe how your language marks background information. You may need to write down some stories in order to study this. Observe what kinds of verbs your language uses for background information and what kinds of words or other markers signal that something is background information. Do these same things when you translate, so that your translation is clear and natural and people can understand it easily.

- (1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information.
- (2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first. (This is not always possible when the background information is very long.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use your language's way of showing that certain information is background information. The examples below explain how this was done in the ULT English translations.

And Jesus himself **was** beginning about 30 years old. He **was** the son (as it was assumed) of Joseph, of Heli. (Luke 3:23 ULT)

As here, English sometimes uses the word "and" to show that there is some kind of change in the story. The verb "was" shows that it is background information.

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother, and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done**, added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

The bolded phrase happened before John rebuked Herod. In English, the helping verb "had" in "had done" shows that Herod did those things before John rebuked him.

- (2) Reorder the information so that earlier events are mentioned first.

Hagar gave birth to Abram's son, and Abram named his son, whom Hagar bore, Ishmael.
Abram was 86 years old when Hagar bore Ishmael to Abram. (Genesis 16:16 ULT)

"**When Abram was 86 years old**, Hagar gave birth to his son, and Abram named his son Ishmael."

Therefore, also exhorting many other things, he preached the good news to the people. But Herod the tetrarch, having been rebuked by him concerning Herodias, the wife of his brother, and **concerning all the evil things that Herod had done**, added even this to them all: He locked John up in prison. (Luke 3:18-20 ULT)

The translation below reorders John's rebuke and Herod's actions.

"Now Herod the tetrarch married his brother's wife, Herodias, and **he did many other evil things**, so John rebuked him. But then Herod did another very evil thing. He had John locked up in prison."

Next we recommend you learn about:

Connecting Words and Phrases ([UTA PDF](#))

Introduction of a New Event ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Job 1:2](#); [Job 1:14](#); [Job 1:18](#); [Job 4:12](#)

Biblical Money

Description

This page answers the question: *How can I translate the values of money in the Bible?*

In early Old Testament times, people weighed their metals, such as silver and gold, and would pay a certain weight of that metal in order to buy things. Later, people started to make coins that each contained a standard amount of a certain metal. The daric is one such coin. In New Testament times, people used silver and copper coins.

The two tables below show some of the most well-known units of money found in the Old Testament (OT) and New Testament (NT). The table for Old Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it weighed. The table for New Testament units shows what kind of metal was used and how much it was worth in terms of a day's wage.

Unit in OT	Metal	Weight
daric	gold coin	8.4 grams
shekel	various metals	11 grams
talent	various metals	33 kilograms

Unit in NT	Metal	Day's Wage
denarius/denarii	silver coin	1 day
drachma	silver coin	1 day
mite	copper coin	1/64 day
shekel	silver coin	4 days
talent	silver	6,000 days

Translation Principle

Do not use modern money values since these change from year to year. Using them will cause the Bible translation to become outdated and inaccurate.

Translation Strategies

The value of most money in the Old Testament was based on its weight. So when translating these weights in the Old Testament, see [Biblical Weight](#). The strategies below are for translating the value of money in the New Testament.

- (1) Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)
- (2) Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many coins were used.
- (3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.
- (4) Use the biblical term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.
- (5) Use the biblical term and explain it in a footnote.

Translation Strategies Applied

The translations strategies are all applied to Luke 7:41 below.

“The one owed 500 denarii, and the other, 50. (Luke 7:41b ULT)

Use the Bible term and spell it in a way that is similar to the way it sounds. (See [Copy or Borrow Words](#).)

“The one owed **500 denali**, and the other, **50.**”

Describe the value of the money in terms of what kind of metal it was made of and how many pieces or coins were used.

“The one owed **500 silver coins**, and the other, **50.**”

(3) Describe the value of the money in terms of what people in Bible times could earn in one day of work.

“The one owed **500 days’ wages**, and the other, **50.**”

(4) Use the Bible term and give the equivalent amount in the text or a footnote.

“The one owed **500 denarii** ¹, and the other owed **50 denarii**. ²”

The footnotes would look like:

[¹] 500 days’ wages [²] 50 days’ wages

(5) Use the Bible term and explain it in a footnote.

“The one owed **500 denarii**,¹ and the other, **50.**” (Luke 7:41 ULT)

[¹] A denarius was the amount of silver that people could earn in one day of work.

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Copy or Borrow Words \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Translate Unknowns \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Job 42:11](#)

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: [Job 2:12](#); [Job 16:10](#); [Job 21:5](#); [Job 29:9](#); [Job 29:10](#); [Job 29:11](#); [Job 29:19](#); [Job 30:4](#); [Job 30:6](#); [Job 33:16](#); [Job 36:10](#); [Job 36:14](#); [Job 36:15](#)

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: [Job 8:18](#); [Job 14:18](#); [Job 19:25](#); [Job 21:32](#); [Job 24:18](#); [Job 33:14](#); [Job 33:23](#); [Job 33:33](#); [Job 36:25](#); [Job 37:22](#); [Job 39:18](#); [Job 40:15](#)

Connect — Hypothetical Conditions

Conditional Relationships

This page answers the question: *How can I translate hypothetical 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.

Hypothetical Condition

Description

A Hypothetical Condition is a condition in which the second event (the “then” clause) will only take place if the first event (the “if” clause) takes place or is fulfilled in some way. Sometimes what takes place is dependent on the actions of other people.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

It is important that translators understand whether or not something is a Hypothetical Condition so that they translate it in the correct way. For example, some of God’s promises to Israel were conditional, based on whether or not Israel obeyed God. However, many of God’s promises to Israel were not conditional; God would keep these promises whether or not the Israelites obeyed. It is important that you (the translator) know the difference between these two types of promises and communicate each one accurately in your own language. Also, sometimes conditions are stated in an order different than the order in which they would happen. If the target language would state the clauses in a different order, then you will need to make that adjustment.

Examples From OBS and the Bible

God promised to bless the people and protect them, **if** they obeyed these laws. But he said he would punish them **if** they did not obey them (Story 13 Frame 7 OBS)

There are two hypothetical conditions in this frame. In both of these conditions, the first event (the “if clause”) is stated after the “then” clause. If this is unnatural or confusing, the clauses can be restated in the more natural order. The first hypothetical condition is: if the Israelites obeyed God, then God would bless and protect them. The second hypothetical condition is: if the Israelites did not obey God, then God would punish them.

If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? (Genesis 4:7a ULT)

If Cain does what is right, then he will be accepted. The only way for Cain to be accepted is by doing what is right.

... **if** this plan or this work is of men, it will be overthrown. But **if** it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. (Acts 5:38b-39aULT)

There are two hypothetical conditions here: (1) If it is true that this plan is of men, then it will be overthrown; (2) If it is true that this plan is of God, then it cannot be overthrown.

Translation Strategies

- (1) If the order of clauses makes the hypothetical condition confusing, then change the order of the clauses.
- (2) If it is not clear where the second event is, mark that part with a word like “then.”

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If the order of clauses makes the hypothetical condition confusing, then change the order of the clauses.

God promised to bless the people and protect them **if** they obeyed these laws. But he said he would punish them **if** they did not obey them. (Story 13 Frame 7 OBS)

If the people obeyed these laws, God promised he would bless them and protect them. But **if** they did not obey these laws, God said that he would punish them.

(2) If it is not clear where the second event is, mark that part with a word like “then.”

God promised to bless the people and protect them, **if** they obeyed these laws. But he said he would punish them **if** they did not obey them. (Story 13 Frame 7 OBS)

If the people obeyed these laws, **then** God promised he would bless them and protect them. But **if** they did not obey these laws, **then** God said that he would punish them.

... **if** this plan or this work is of men, it will be overthrown. But **if** it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; (Acts 5:38b-39a ULT)

... **if** this plan or this work is of men, **then** it will be overthrown. But **if** it is of God, **then** you will not be able to overthrow them;

"

Referenced in: [Job 13:15](#); [Job 40:14](#); [Job 40:23](#); [Job 41:8](#)

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.

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Referenced in: [Job 1:10](#); [Job 3:4](#); [Job 3:26](#); [Job 6:10](#); [Job 7:21](#); [Job 9:18](#); [Job 9:28](#); [Job 10:15](#); [Job 13:10](#); [Job 14:6](#); [Job 22:23](#); [Job 29:21](#); [Job 30:6](#); [Job 32:4](#); [Job 33:4](#); [Job 33:12](#); [Job 34:28](#); [Job 42:3](#)

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](#).

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Referenced in: [Job 33:32](#)

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: [Job 3:24](#); [Job 3:25](#); [Job 5:2](#); [Job 5:6](#); [Job 5:7](#); [Job 5:12](#); [Job 5:13](#); [Job 5:16](#); [Job 5:17](#); [Job 6:21](#); [Job 12:10](#); [Job 12:11](#); [Job 12:14](#); [Job 12:15](#); [Job 13:19](#); [Job 13:28](#); [Job 14:15](#); [Job 15:28](#); [Job 16:21](#); [Job 17:4](#); [Job 20:2](#); [Job 21:21](#); [Job 22:6](#); [Job 23:17](#); [Job 24:17](#); [Job 28:24](#); [Job 29:11](#); [Job 30:26](#); [Job 31:12](#); [Job 31:18](#); [Job 31:23](#); [Job 34 General Notes](#); [Job 34:3](#); [Job 35:3](#); [Job 36:9](#); [Job 36:27](#); [Job 36:31](#); [Job 37:6](#); [Job 37:15](#); [Job 37:21](#); [Job 40:10](#); [Job 40:20](#)

Direct and Indirect Quotations

Description

There are two kinds of quotations: direct quotations and indirect quotations.

A direct quotation occurs when someone reports what another person said from the viewpoint of that original speaker. People usually expect that this kind of quotation will represent the original speaker's exact words. In the example below, John would have said "I" when referring to himself, so the narrator, who is reporting John's words, uses the word "I" in the quotation to refer to John. To show that these are John's exact words, many languages put the words between quotation marks: "".

- John said, "I do not know at what time I will arrive."

An indirect quotation occurs when a speaker reports what someone else said, but in this case, the speaker is reporting it from his own point of view instead and not from the original person's point of view. This kind of quotation usually contains changes in pronouns, and it often includes changes in time, in word choices, and in length. In the example below, the narrator refers to John as "he" in the quotation and uses the word "would" to replace the future tense, indicated by "will."

- John said that he did not know at what time he would arrive.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages, reported speech can be expressed by either direct or indirect quotations. In other languages, it is more natural to use one than the other. There may be a certain meaning implied by using one rather than the other. So for each quotation, translators need to decide whether it is best to translate it as a direct quotation or as an indirect quotation.

Examples From the Bible

The verses in the examples below contain both direct and indirect quotations. In the explanation below the verse, we have marked in bold the words that are quoted.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, "Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them."
(Luke 5:14 ULT)

- Indirect quote: He commanded him **to tell no one**,
- Direct quote: but told him, "**Go, show yourself to the priest ...**"

And being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, he answered them and said, "The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you."
(Luke 17:20-21 ULT)

- Indirect quote: Being asked by the Pharisees **when the kingdom of God was coming**,
- Direct quote: he answered them and said, "**The kingdom of God is not coming with careful observation. Neither will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is among you.**"
- Direct quotes: Neither will they say, '**Look, here it is!**' or, '**There it is!**'

This page answers the question: *What are direct and indirect quotations?*

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

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

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

[Quotations and Quote Margins \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Translation Strategies

If the kind of quote used in the source text would work well in your language, consider using it. If the kind of quote used in that context is not natural for your language, follow these strategies.

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.
- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If a direct quote would not work well in your language, change it to an indirect quote.

And he commanded him to tell no one, but, **“Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”** (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him to tell no one, but **to go and show himself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for his cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.**

- (2) If an indirect quote would not work well in your language, change it to a direct quote.

And he commanded him **to tell no one**, but, “Go, show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing, according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.” (Luke 5:14 ULT)

He commanded him, **“Tell no one.** But go and show yourself to the priest and offer a sacrifice for your cleansing according to what Moses commanded, for a testimony to them.”

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_quotations.

Next we recommend you learn about: " [Quotes within Quotes \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Job 7:13](#); [Job 8:18](#); [Job 9:22](#); [Job 9:27](#); [Job 17:12](#); [Job 22:20](#); [Job 33:13](#); [Job 35:14](#); [Job 36:10](#)

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 ἐν ἡ μία κεραία οὐ μὴ παρέλθῃ ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου (Matthew 5:18)

...iota one or one serif **not not** may pass away from the law

...**not even** one iota or one serif may pass away from the law

or:

...**certainly no** iota or serif may pass away from the law

Next we recommend you learn about:

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

Referenced in: [Job 5:17](#); [Job 5:24](#); [Job 6:10](#); [Job 6:29](#); [Job 7:9](#); [Job 7:11](#); [Job 8:15](#); [Job 8:20](#); [Job 9:13](#); [Job 10:14](#); [Job 15:22](#); [Job 20:19](#); [Job 20:20](#); [Job 21:4](#); [Job 24:13](#); [Job 24:21](#); [Job 27:6](#); [Job 27:11](#); [Job 30:10](#); [Job 31:32](#); [Job 37:4](#); [Job 39:22](#)

Doublet

Description

We are using the word “doublet” to refer to two words or phrases that are used together and either mean the same thing or mean very close to the same thing. Often they are joined with the word “and.” Unlike [Hendiadys](#), in which one of the words modifies the other, in a doublet the two words or phrases are equal and are used to emphasize or intensify the one idea that is expressed by the two words or phrases.

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

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

[Figures of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

A very similar issue is the repetition of the same word or phrase for emphasis, usually with no other words between them. Because these figures of speech are so similar and have the same effect, we will treat them here together.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In some languages people do not use doublets. Or they may use doublets, but only in certain situations, so a doublet might not make sense in their language in some verses. People might think that the verse is describing two ideas or actions, when it is only describing one. In this case, translators may need to find some other way to express the meaning expressed by the doublet.

Examples From the Bible

He has one people **scattered** and **dispersed** among the peoples (Esther 3:8 ULT)

The bolded words mean the same thing. Together they mean the people were spread out.

He attacked two men **more righteous** and **better** than himself. (1 Kings 2:32b ULT)

This means that they were “much more righteous” than he was.

You have decided to prepare **false** and **deceptive** words. (Daniel 2:9b ULT)

This means that they had decided to lie, which is another way of saying that they intended to deceive people.

... like of a lamb **without blemish** and **without spot**. (1 Peter 1:19b ULT)

This means that he was like a lamb that did not have any defect—not even one.

Then they approached {and} woke him up, saying, “**Master! Master!** We are perishing!” (Luke 8:24 ULT)

The repetition of “Master” means that the disciples called to Jesus urgently and continually.

Translation Strategies

If a doublet would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, consider these strategies.

- (1) Translate only one of the words or phrases.
- (2) If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words or phrases and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”
- (3) If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Translate only one of the words.

You have decided to prepare **false** and **deceptive** words. (Daniel 2:9b ULT)

“You have decided to prepare **false** things to say.”

(2) If the doublet is used to intensify the meaning, translate one of the words and add a word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”

He has one people **scattered** and **dispersed** among the peoples (Esther 3:8 ULT)

“He has one people **very spread out**.”

(3) If the doublet is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

... like a lamb **without blemish** and **without spot**. (1 Peter 1:19b ULT)

- English can emphasize this with “any” and “at all.”

“... like a lamb **without any blemish at all**.”

Then they approached {and} woke him up, saying, “**Master! Master!** We are perishing!” (Luke 8:24 ULT)

Then they approached {and} woke him up, **urgently shouting, “Master!**
We are perishing!”

”

Referenced in: Job 1:1; Job 1:4; Job 1:8; Job 1:16; Job 2:3; Job 2:11; Job 3:2; Job 3:5; Job 3:22; Job 3:23; Job 3:26; Job 4:14; Job 8:6; Job 9:4; Job 10:8; Job 10:20; Job 10:21; Job 11:5; Job 13:23; Job 14:11; Job 15:10; Job 15:16; Job 15:24; Job 20:17; Job 21:23; Job 24:14; Job 28:3; Job 28:22; Job 29:8; Job 34:22; Job 35:5; Job 36:16; Job 36:17; Job 37:2; Job 38:23; Job 38:27; Job 39:13; Job 39:22; Job 39:28; Job 40:10; Job 42:11; Job 42:17

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: Job 1:8; Job 1:11; Job 2:3; Job 2:5; Job 3:3; Job 3:12; Job 3:20; Job 4:6; Job 4:8; Job 4:19; Job 5:9; Job 5:19; Job 5:20; Job 5:25; Job 6:7; Job 6:14; Job 6:19; Job 6:26; Job 6:28; Job 7:15; Job 7:16; Job 8:2; Job 8:5; Job 8:21; Job 9:24; Job 9:26; Job 9:34; Job 10:20; Job 11:8; Job 12:4; Job 12:5; Job 12:7; Job 12:8; Job 14:1; Job 15:9; Job 15:11; Job 15:16; Job 15:20; Job 16:21; Job 17:14; Job 18:10; Job 19:27; Job 21:4; Job 21:8; Job 22:11; Job 22:24; Job 23:6; Job 23:13; Job 24:19; Job 24:25; Job 25:6; Job 27:2; Job 27:7; Job 27:19; Job 28:1; Job 28:16; Job 28:18; Job 29:5; Job 30:8; Job 30:30; Job 31:2; Job 31:7; Job 31:23; Job 31:35; Job 31:40; Job 33:20; Job 34:6; Job 34:10; Job 34:13; Job 34:16; Job 34:23; Job 34:30; Job 34:31; Job 34:33; Job 34:34; Job 35:3; Job 35:4; Job 35:14; Job 36:2; Job 36:5; Job 36:18; Job 36:19; Job 36:33; Job 37:3; Job 37:6; Job 37:7; Job 37:9; Job 37:16; Job 38:5; Job 38:11; Job 38:24; Job 38:25; Job 38:31; Job 39:6; Job 39:23; Job 39:25; Job 39:26; Job 41:1; Job 41:11; Job 41:26; Job 41:27

Euphemism

Description

A euphemism is a mild or polite way of referring to something that is unpleasant, embarrassing, or socially unacceptable, such as death or activities usually done in private.

... they found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa.
(1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

This means that Saul and his sons “were dead.” It is a euphemism because the important thing was not that Saul and his sons had fallen but that they were dead. Sometimes people do not like to speak directly about death because it is unpleasant.

This page answers the question: *What is a euphemism?*

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

Figures of Speech (UTA PDF)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages use different euphemisms. If the target language does not use the same euphemism as in the source language, readers may not understand what it means and they may think that the writer means only what the words literally say.

Examples From the Bible

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT)

The original hearers would have understood that Saul went into the cave to use it as a toilet, but the writer wanted to avoid offending or distracting them, so **he did not say specifically** what Saul did or what he left in the cave.

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

In order **to be polite**, Mary uses a euphemism to say that she has never had sexual intercourse with a man.

Translation Strategies

If euphemism would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.
- (2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a euphemism from your own culture.

... where there was a cave. Saul went inside to **cover his feet**. (1 Samuel 24:3b ULT) — Some languages might use euphemisms like these:

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **dig a hole**”

“... where there was a cave. Saul went into the cave to **have some time alone**”

But Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I have not **known a man?**” (Luke 1:34 ULT)

But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I have not **slept with a man?**"

(2) State the information plainly without a euphemism if it would not be offensive.

They found Saul and his sons **fallen** on Mount Gilboa. (1 Chronicles 10:8b ULT)

"They found Saul and his sons **dead** on Mount Gilboa."

"

Referenced in: [Job 1:5](#); [Job 1:11](#); [Job 2:5](#); [Job 2:9](#); [Job 3:11](#); [Job 3:13](#); [Job 5:26](#); [Job 7:20](#); [Job 10:18](#); [Job 11:20](#); [Job 13:19](#); [Job 14:10](#); [Job 14:12](#); [Job 14:20](#); [Job 15:30](#); [Job 16:22](#); [Job 17:1](#); [Job 17:5](#); [Job 17:16](#); [Job 20:11](#); [Job 21:26](#); [Job 27:5](#); [Job 29:18](#); [Job 31:10](#); [Job 31:39](#); [Job 32:3](#); [Job 32:22](#); [Job 33:18](#); [Job 34:15](#); [Job 34:20](#); [Job 36:12](#)

Exclamations

Description

Exclamations are words or sentences that show strong feeling such as surprise, joy, fear, or anger. In the ULT and UST, they usually have an exclamation mark (!) at the end. The mark shows that it is an exclamation. The situation and the meaning of what the people said helps us understand what feelings they were expressing. In the example below from Matthew 8, the speakers were terribly afraid. In the example from Matthew 9, the speakers were amazed, because something happened that they had never seen before.

This page answers the question: *What are ways of translating exclamations?*

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

Sentence Types (UTA PDF)

Save us, Lord; we are about to die! (Matthew 8:25b ULT)

When the demon had been driven out, the mute man spoke. The crowds were astonished and said, "This has never been seen before in Israel!" (Matthew 9:33 ULT)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Languages have different ways of showing that a sentence communicates strong emotion.

Examples From the Bible

Some exclamations have a word that shows feeling. The sentences below have "Oh" and "Ah." The word "oh" here shows the speaker's amazement.

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33 ULT)

The word "Alas" below shows that Gideon was very frightened.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, "**Alas**, O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!" (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Some exclamations start with a question word such as "how" or "why," even though they are not questions. The sentence below shows that the speaker is amazed at how unsearchable God's judgments are.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

Some exclamations in the Bible do not have a main verb. The exclamation below shows that the speaker is disgusted with the person he is speaking to.

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is "is" or "are."
- (2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling.
- (3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.
- (4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.
- (5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If an exclamation in your language needs a verb, add one. Often a good verb is “is” or “are.”

You worthless person! (Matthew 5:22b ULT)

“You **are** such a worthless person!”

Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“Oh, the riches of the wisdom and the knowledge of God **are** so deep!”

(2) Use an exclamation word from your language that shows the strong feeling. In the first suggested translation below, the word “wow” shows that they were astonished. In the second suggested translation, the expression “Oh no” shows that something terrible or frightening has happened.

They were extremely astonished, saying, “He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf hear and the mute speak.” (Mark 7:37 ULT)

“They were extremely astonished, saying, “**Wow!** He has done everything well. He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.””

Alas, oh my Lord Yahweh! For because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face! (Judges 6:22b ULT)

“**Oh no,** Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(3) Translate the exclamation word with a sentence that shows the feeling.

“**Alas,** O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

“Lord Yahweh, **what will happen to me?** For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” “**Help,** Lord Yahweh! For I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

(4) Use a word that emphasizes the part of the sentence that brings about the strong feeling.

How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways beyond discovering! (Romans 11:33b ULT)

“His judgments are **so** unsearchable and his ways are **far** beyond discovering!”

(5) If the strong feeling is not clear in the target language, then tell how the person felt.

When Gideon saw that he was the angel of Yahweh, Gideon lamented, “**Alas,** O my Lord Yahweh, for because of this I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!” (Judges 6:22 ULT)

Gideon understood that this was the angel of Yahweh. **He was terrified** and said, “**Alas,** Lord Yahweh! I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face!”

”

Referenced in: [Job 1:15](#); [Job 2:9](#); [Job 4:10](#); [Job 21:16](#); [Job 40:16](#)

Exclusive and Inclusive 'We'

Description

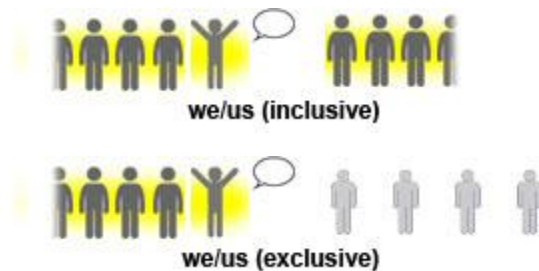
Some languages have more than one form of "we": an inclusive form that means "I and you" and an exclusive form that means "I and someone else but not you." The exclusive form excludes the person being spoken to. The inclusive form includes the person being spoken to and possibly others. This is also 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: [Job 5:27](#); [Job 8:9](#); [Job 31:15](#); [Job 34:4](#); [Job 35:11](#); [Job 37:19](#); [Job 37:23](#)

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: [Job 1:9](#); [Job 6:15](#); [Job 7:8](#); [Job 11:2](#); [Job 12:4](#); [Job 13:28](#); [Job 15:2](#); [Job 16:21](#); [Job 17:2](#); [Job 17:10](#); [Job 17:12](#); [Job 18:4](#); [Job 19:28](#); [Job 21:15](#); [Job 22:8](#); [Job 22:17](#); [Job 22:29](#); [Job 23:7](#); [Job 26:2](#); [Job 26:3](#); [Job 28:28](#); [Job 33:13](#); [Job 36:4](#); [Job 38:41](#); [Job 39:17](#); [Job 40:2](#); [Job 40:9](#); [Job 40:19](#)

Forms of 'You' — Dual/Plural

Description

Some languages have a singular form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a plural form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Some languages also have a dual form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to only two people. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

This page answers the question: *How do I know if the word 'you' is dual or plural?*

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

[Forms of You \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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

[Parts of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have a singular form of “you” and a plural form of “you.” When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns and verb forms show us whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person. However, they do not show us whether it refers to only two people or more than two people. When the pronouns do not show us how many people the word “you” refers to, we need to look at the context to see how many people the speaker was speaking to.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular, dual, and plural forms of “you” will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning “you,” translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know how many people the speaker was addressing.

Examples From the Bible

Then **James and John**, the sons of Zebedee, came up to him, saying to him, “Teacher, we desire that you to do for us whatever we ask you.” 36 So he said to them, “What do **you** want me to do for **you**?” (Mark 10:35-36 ULT)

Jesus is asking the two, James and John, what they want him to do for them. If the target language has a dual form of “you,” use that. If the target language does not have a dual form, then the plural form would be appropriate.

Jesus sent out two of his disciples and said to them, “Go into the village opposite us. As soon as **you** enter it, **you** will find a colt tied there, on which no one has yet sat. Untie it and bring it to me.” (Mark 11:1b-2 ULT)

The context makes it clear that Jesus is addressing two people. If the target language has a dual form of “you,” use that. If the target language does not have a dual form, then the plural form would be appropriate.

James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes who are in the dispersion: Greetings. Consider it all joy, my brothers, when **you** experience various troubles. You know that the testing of **your** faith produces endurance. (James 1:1-3 ULT)

James wrote this letter to many people, so the word “you” refers to many people. If the target language has a plural form of “you,” it would be best to use it here.

Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

- (1) Look at the translationNotes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
- (4) Look at the context to see who the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_youdual.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Forms of 'You' — Singular (UTA PDF)

Referenced in: [Job 38:8](#)

Forms of 'You' — Singular

Description

Some languages have a **singular** form of “you” for when the word “you” refers to just one person, and a **plural** form for when the word “you” refers to more than one person. Translators who speak one of these languages will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language. Other languages, such as English, have only one form, which people use regardless of how many people it refers to.

This page answers the question: *How do I know if the word 'you' is singular?*

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

[Parts of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Forms of You \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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

The Bible was first written in the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek languages. These languages all have both a singular form of “you” and a plural form of “you.” When we read the Bible in those languages, the pronouns and verb forms show us whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. When we read the Bible in a language that does not have different forms of you, we need to look at the context to see how many people the speaker was speaking to.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators who speak a language that has distinct singular and plural forms of “you” will always need to know what the speaker meant so they can choose the right word for “you” in their language.
- Many languages also have different forms of the verb depending on whether the subject is singular or plural. So even if there is no pronoun meaning “you,” translators of these languages will need to know if the speaker was referring to one person or more than one.

Often the context will make it clear whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one. If you look at the other pronouns in the sentence, they will help you know the number of people the speaker was speaking to. Sometimes Greek and Hebrew speakers used the singular form of “you” even though they were speaking to a group of people. (See [Forms of 'You' — Singular to a Crowd.](#))

Examples From the Bible

But he said, “All these things **I** have kept from my youth.” But when he heard this, Jesus said to him, “One thing is still lacking to **you**. All things, as much as **you** have, **sell** all and **distribute** to the poor, and **you** will have treasure in heaven—and **come, follow** me.” (Luke 18:21-22 ULT)

The ruler was speaking about just himself when he said “I.” This shows us that when Jesus said “you” he was referring only to the ruler and he used the singular form. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” need the singular form here, as well as for the verbs “sell,” “distribute,” “come,” and “follow.”

The angel said to him, “**Dress yourself** and **put on your** sandals.” So he did that. He said to him, “**Put on your** outer garment and **follow** me.” (Acts 12:8 ULT)

The angel used singular forms here and the context makes it clear that he was speaking to one person and that only one person did what the the angel commanded. So languages that have singular and plural forms of “you” would need the singular form here for “yourself” and “your.” Also, if verbs have different forms for singular and plural subjects, then the verbs “dress,” “put on,” and “follow” need the form that indicates a singular subject.

All the ones {who are} with me greet **you**. **Greet** the ones loving us in faith. Grace {be} with all of **you**. (Titus 3:15 ULT)

Paul wrote this letter to one person, Titus, so most of the time the word “you” in this letter is singular and refers only to Titus. In this verse, the first “you” is singular, so the greeting is for Titus, as well as the instruction to greet the others there. The second “you,” however, is plural, so the blessing is for Titus and for all of the believers there in Crete.

“Having gone, **search** carefully for the young child, and after **you** have found him, **report** to me so that I also, having come, might worship him.” (Matthew 2:8 ULT)

Since Herod is speaking to all of the learned men, the word “you” and the commands “search” and “report” are plural.

Strategies for finding out how many people “you” refers to

- (1) Look at the notes to see if they tell whether “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (2) Look at the UST to see if it says anything that would show you whether the word “you” refers to one person or more than one person.
- (3) If you have a Bible that is written in a language that distinguishes “you” singular from “you” plural, see which form of “you” that Bible has in that sentence.
- (4) Look at the context to see how many people the speaker was talking to and who responded.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_younum.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Forms of 'You' — Dual/Plural (UTA PDF)

Referenced in: [Job 6:21](#); [Job 7:7](#); [Job 9:28](#); [Job 9:31](#); [Job 10:15](#); [Job 12:2](#); [Job 12:7](#); [Job 13:2](#); [Job 13:20](#); [Job 14:3](#); [Job 16:2](#); [Job 16:3](#); [Job 16:4](#); [Job 16:5](#); [Job 16:7](#); [Job 16:8](#); [Job 17:3](#); [Job 19:2](#); [Job 19:28](#); [Job 21:2](#); [Job 21:3](#); [Job 21:5](#); [Job 21:27](#); [Job 26:2](#); [Job 27:5](#); [Job 27:11](#); [Job 32:6](#); [Job 34:16](#); [Job 35:2](#); [Job 35:3](#); [Job 36:2](#); [Job 37:2](#); [Job 37:15](#)

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: Job 2:10; Job 3:19; Job 4:4; Job 5:2; Job 5:5; Job 5:16; Job 5:20; Job 5:22; Job 5:23; Job 7:5; Job 14:9; Job 14:18; Job 17:14; Job 18:16; Job 19:16; Job 19:20; Job 20:5; Job 20:6; Job 20:16; Job 20:29; Job 21:10; Job 21:12; Job 21:26; Job 21:28; Job 21:29; Job 23:12; Job 24:2; Job 24:3; Job 24:5; Job 24:6; Job 24:8; Job 24:10; Job 24:14; Job 24:15; Job 24:21; Job 26:8; Job 26:9; Job 28:3; Job 28:4; Job 28:7; Job 28:8; Job 29:6; Job 29:13; Job 30:8; Job 31:16; Job 31:17; Job 31:19; Job 31:32; Job 31:40; Job 34:18; Job 36:7; Job 37:8; Job 37:11; Job 37:15; Job 37:16; Job 38:9; Job 38:34; Job 38:41; Job 39:4; Job 39:5; Job 39:13; Job 39:19; Job 39:22; Job 39:26; Job 41:26

Go and Come

Description

This page answers the question: *What do I do if the word "go" or "come" is confusing in a certain sentence?*

Different languages have different ways of determining whether to use the words "go" or "come" and whether to use the words "take" or "bring" when talking about motion. For example, when saying that they are approaching a person who has called them, English speakers say "I'm coming," while Spanish speakers say "I'm going." You will need to study the context in order to understand what is meant by the words "go" and "come" (and also "take" and "bring"), and then translate those words in a way that your readers will understand which direction people are moving in.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Different languages have different ways of talking about motion. The biblical languages or your source language may use the words "go" and "come" or "take" and "bring" differently than your language uses them. If these words are not translated in the way that is natural in your language, your readers may be confused about which direction people are moving.

Examples From the Bible

Yahweh said to Noah, "**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark." (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

In some languages, this would lead people to think that Yahweh was in the ark.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you. Then you will be free from my oath. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

Abraham was speaking to his servant. Abraham's relatives lived far away from where he and his servant were standing and he wanted his servant to **go** to them, not **come** toward Abraham.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14a ULT)

Moses is speaking to the people in the wilderness. They had not yet gone into the land that God was giving them. In some languages, it would make more sense to say, "When you have **gone** into the land ..."

They **brought** him up to the temple in Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. (Luke 2:22b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to say that they **took** or **carried** Jesus to the temple.

Then see, there was a man whose name was Jairus, and he was a leader of the synagogue. And falling at the feet of Jesus, he begged him to come to his house. (Luke 8:41 ULT)

The man was not at his house when he spoke to Jesus. He wanted Jesus to **go** with him to his house.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

In some languages, it might make more sense to ask what did you come out to see.

Translation Strategies

If the word used in the ULT would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other strategies.

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.
- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the word “go,” “come,” “take,” or “bring” that would be natural in your language.

But you will be free from my oath if you **come** to my relatives and they will not give her to you. (Genesis 24:41 ULT)

But you will be free from my oath if you **go** to my relatives and they will not give her to you.

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you come out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

- (2) Use another word that expresses the right meaning.

When you have **come** to the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ... (Deuteronomy 17:14 ULT)

“When you have **arrived** in the land that Yahweh your God gives you, and when you take possession of it and begin to live in it ...”

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Come**, you and all your household, into the ark ...” (Genesis 7:1 ULT)

Yahweh said to Noah, “**Enter**, you and all your household, into the ark ...”

What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind? (Luke 7:24b ULT)

What did you travel out into the desert to see? A reed shaken by the wind?

”

Referenced in: [Job 41:19](#)

Hendiadys

Description

In a hendiadys, a speaker uses two words that mean different things and that are connected with “and.” These two words work together to express a single idea. Usually one of the words is the primary idea and the other word further describes the primary one.

... his own **kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

Though “kingdom” and “glory” are both nouns, “glory” actually tells what kind of kingdom it is: it is a **kingdom of glory** or a **glorious kingdom**.

Two phrases connected by “and” can also be a hendiadys when they refer to a single person, thing, or event.

while we look forward to receiving **the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**. (Titus 2:13b ULT)

Titus 2:13 contains two hendiadyses. “The blessed hope” and “appearing of the glory” refer to the same thing and serve to strengthen the idea that the return of Jesus Christ is greatly anticipated and wonderful. Also, “our great God” and “Savior Jesus Christ” refer to one person, not two.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

- Often a hendiadys contains an abstract noun. Some languages may not have a noun with the same meaning.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that the second word is further describing the first one.
- Many languages do not use the hendiadys, so people may not understand that only one person or thing is meant, not two.

Examples From the Bible

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

“A mouth” and “wisdom” are nouns, but in this figure of speech “wisdom” describes what comes from the mouth.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

“Willing” and “obedient” are adjectives, but “willing” describes “obedient.”

Translation Strategies

If the hendiadys would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are other options:

- (1) Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.
- (2) Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.
- (3) Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.
- (4) Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word or phrase describes the

This page answers the question: *What is hendiadys 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)

Parts of Speech (UTA PDF)

other.

(5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Substitute the describing noun with an adjective that means the same thing.

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

For I will give you **wise words** ...

Walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own glorious kingdom**.

(2) Substitute the describing noun with a phrase that means the same thing.

For I will give you **a mouth and wisdom** ... (Luke 21:15a ULT)

for I will give you **words of wisdom**.

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you into **his own kingdom and glory**. (1 Thessalonians 2:12b ULT)

You should walk in a manner that is worthy of God, who calls you to **his own kingdom of glory**.

(3) Substitute the describing adjective with an adverb that means the same thing.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

If you are **willingly obedient** ...

(4) Substitute other parts of speech that mean the same thing and show that one word or phrase describes the other.

If you are willing and obedient ... (Isaiah 1:19a ULT)

The adjective "obedient" can be substituted with the verb "obey."

if you **obey willingly** ...

(4) and (5) If it is unclear that only one thing is meant, change the phrase so that this is clear.

We look forward to receiving **the blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ**. (Titus 2:13b ULT)

The noun "glory" can be changed to the adjective "glorious" to make it clear that Jesus' appearing is what we hope for. Also, "Jesus Christ" can be moved to the front of the phrase and "great God and Savior" put into a relative clause that describes the one person, Jesus Christ.

We look forward to receiving **what we are longing for, the blessed and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ, who is our great God and Savior**.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Doublet ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: Introduction to Job; Job 1:5; Job 1:7; Job 1:22; Job 2:12; Job 6:9; Job 10:17; Job 17:10; Job 23:3; Job 25:2; Job 26:11; Job 30:3; Job 32:6; Job 32:16; Job 34:1; Job 35:1; Job 36:1; Job 36:9; Job 37:14; Job 38:1; Job 39:24; Job 39:28; Job 40:1; Job 40:3; Job 40:6; Job 40:21; Job 41:20

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: [Job 1:1](#); [Job 1:6](#); [Job 1:15](#); [Job 1:17](#); [Job 2:11](#); [Job 6:19](#); [Job 9:9](#); [Job 9:13](#); [Job 22:24](#); [Job 26:6](#); [Job 26:12](#); [Job 28:19](#); [Job 32:2](#); [Job 38:31](#); [Job 38:32](#); [Job 40:15](#); [Job 41:1](#); [Job 42:14](#)

Hyperbole

Description

A speaker or writer can use exactly the same words to say something that he means as completely true, or as generally true, or as a hyperbole. This is why it can be hard to decide how to understand a statement. For example, the sentence below could mean three different things.

It rains here every night.

The speaker means this as literally true if he means that it really does rain here every night.

The speaker means this as a **generalization** if he means that it rains here most nights.

The speaker means this as a **hyperbole** if he wants to say that it rains more than it actually does, usually in order to express a strong attitude toward the amount or frequency of rain, such as being annoyed or being happy about it.

This page answers the question: *What are hyperboles? What are generalizations? How can I translate them?*

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

Figures of Speech (UTA PDF)

Hyperbole

In hyperbole, a figure of speech that uses exaggeration, a speaker deliberately describes something with an extreme or even unreal statement, usually to show his strong feeling or opinion about it. He expects people to understand that he is exaggerating.

They will not leave **stone upon stone in you**. (Luke 19:44b ULT)

This is an exaggeration. It means that the enemies will completely destroy Jerusalem.

Moses was educated in **all the wisdom of the Egyptians**. (Acts 7:22a ULT)

This hyperbole means that he had learned everything an Egyptian education could offer.

Generalization

This is a statement that is true most of the time or in most situations that it could apply to.

The one who ignores instruction **will have poverty and shame**, but **honor will come** to him who learns from correction. (Proverbs 13:18)

These generalizations tell about what normally happens to people who ignore instruction and what normally happens to people who learn from correction. There may be some exceptions to these statements, but they are generally true.

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as **the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words**. (Matthew 6:7)

This generalization tells about what Gentiles were known for doing. Many Gentiles did this. It does not matter if a few did not. The point was that the hearers should not join in this well-known practice.

Even though a hyperbole or a generalization may have a strong-sounding word like "all," "always," "none," or "never," it does not necessarily mean **exactly** "all," "always," "none," or "never." It simply means "most," "most of the time," "hardly any," or "rarely."

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Readers need to be able to understand whether or not a statement is literally true.

If readers realize that a statement is not literally true, they need to be able to understand whether it is a hyperbole, a generalization, or a lie. (Though the Bible is completely true, it tells about people who did not always tell the truth.)

Examples From the Bible

Examples of Hyperbole

If your hand causes you to stumble, **cut it off**. It is better for you to enter into life maimed ... (Mark 9:43a ULT)

When Jesus said to cut off your hand, he meant that we should **do whatever extreme things** we need to do in order not to sin. He used this hyperbole to show how extremely important it is to try to stop sinning.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel with 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and troops **as numerous as the sand on the seashore**. (1 Samuel 13:5a ULT)

The bolded phrase is an exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the emotion that the Philistine army was overwhelming in number. It means that there were **many, many** soldiers in the Philistine army.

But as his anointing teaches you **everything** and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, remain in him. (1 John 2:27b ULT)

This is a hyperbole. It expresses the assurance that God's Spirit teaches us about **all things that we need to know**. God's Spirit does not teach us about everything that it is possible to know.

When they found him, they also said to him, "**Everyone** is looking for you." (Mark 1:37 ULT)

The disciples probably did not mean that everyone in the city was looking for Jesus, but that **many people** were looking for him, or that all of Jesus' closest friends there were looking for him. This is an exaggeration for the purpose of expressing the emotion that they and many others were worried about him.

Examples of Generalization

Can **any good thing** come out of Nazareth? (John 1:46b ULT)

This rhetorical question is meant to express the generalization that there is nothing good in Nazareth. The people there had a reputation for being uneducated and not strictly religious. Of course, there were exceptions.

One of them, of their own prophets, has said, "**Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy bellies**." (Titus 1:12 ULT)

This is a generalization that means that Cretans had a reputation to be like this because, in general, this is how Cretans behaved. It is possible that there were exceptions.

A lazy hand causes a person to be poor, but the hand of the diligent person gains riches. (Proverbs 10:4 ULT)

This is generally true, and it reflects the experience of most people. It is possible that there are exceptions in some circumstances.

Caution

- Do not assume that something is an exaggeration just because it seems to be impossible. God does miraculous things.

They saw Jesus **walking on the sea** and coming near the boat. (John 6:19b ULT)

This is not hyperbole. Jesus really walked on the water. It is a literal statement.

- Do not assume that the word “all” is always a generalization that means “most.”

Yahweh is righteous in **all** his ways and gracious in **all** he does. (Psalms 145:17 ULT)

Yahweh is always righteous. This is a completely true statement.

Translation Strategies

If the hyperbole or generalization would be natural and people would understand it and not think that it is a lie, consider using it. If not, here are other options.

- (1) Express the meaning without the exaggeration.
- (2) For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”
- (3) For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.
- (4) For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like “all,” “always,” “none,” or “never,” consider deleting that word.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Express the meaning without the exaggeration.

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and troops **as numerous as the sand on the seashore**. (1 Samuel 13:5a ULT)

The Philistines gathered together to fight against Israel: 3,000 chariots, 6,000 men to drive the chariots, and **a great number of troops**.

- (2) For a generalization, show that it is a generalization by using a phrase like “in general” or “in most cases.”

The one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame. (Proverbs 13:18a ULT)

In general, the one who ignores instruction will have poverty and shame

When you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the **Gentiles do**, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words. (Matthew 6:7 ULT)

And when you pray, do not make useless repetitions as the Gentiles **generally** do, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words.

- (3) For a hyperbole or a generalization, add a word like “many” or “almost” to show that the hyperbole or generalization is not meant to be exact.

The **whole** country of Judea and **all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5a ULT)

Almost all the country of Judea and **almost all** the people of Jerusalem went out to him. or:

Many of the country of Judea and many of the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

(4) For a hyperbole or a generalization that has a word like "all," "always," "none," or "never," consider deleting that word.

The whole country of Judea and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. (Mark 1:5a ULT)

The country of Judea and the people of Jerusalem went out to him.

"

Referenced in: [Job 1:5](#); [Job 3:15](#); [Job 7:16](#); [Job 8:9](#); [Job 8:12](#); [Job 9:3](#); [Job 15:7](#); [Job 17:1](#); [Job 20:22](#); [Job 20:26](#); [Job 21:23](#); [Job 21:33](#); [Job 22:5](#); [Job 22:8](#); [Job 22:18](#); [Job 27:19](#); [Job 28:3](#); [Job 28:9](#); [Job 28:10](#); [Job 31:18](#); [Job 36:4](#); [Job 36:30](#); [Job 37:3](#); [Job 40:19](#); [Job 41:9](#); [Job 41:16](#)

Hypothetical Situations

Consider these phrases: “If the sun stopped shining ...” “What if the sun stopped shining ...” “Suppose the sun stopped shining ...” and “If only the sun had not stopped shining.” We use such expressions to set up hypothetical situations, imagining what might have happened or what could happen in the future but probably will not. We also use them to express regret or wishes. Hypothetical expressions occur often in the Bible. You (the translator) need to translate them in a way that people will know that the event did not actually happen and so that they will understand why the event was imagined.

This page answers the question: *What is a hypothetical situation?*

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

Writing Styles (UTA PDF)

Description

Hypothetical situations are situations that are not real. They can be in the past, present, or future. Hypothetical situations in the past and present have not happened, are not happening now, and ones in the future are not expected to happen.

People sometimes tell about conditions and what would happen if those conditions were met, but they know that these things have not happened or probably will not happen. (The conditions comprise a phrase that starts with “if.”)

- If he had lived to be 100 years old, he would have seen his grandson’s grandson. (But he did not.)
- If he lived to be 100 years old, he would still be alive today. (But he is not.)
- If he lives to be 100 years old, he will see his grandson’s grandson. (But he probably will not.)

People sometimes express wishes about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- I wish he had come.
- I wish he were here.
- I wish he would come.

People sometimes express regrets about things that have not happened or that are not expected to happen.

- If only he had come.
- If only he were here.
- If only he would come.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Translators need to recognize the different kinds of hypothetical situations in the Bible and understand that they are unreal.
- Translators need to know their own language’s ways of talking about different kinds of hypothetical situations.

Examples From the Bible

Hypothetical Situations in the Past

“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! **If the mighty deeds had been done** in Tyre and Sidon which were done in you, **they would have repented** long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” (Matthew 11:21 ULT)

Here in Matthew 11:21, Jesus said that **if** the people living in the ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon had been able to see the miracles that he performed, they would have repented long ago. The people of Tyre and Sidon did not actually see his miracles, and they did not repent. He said this to rebuke the people of Chorazin and Bethsaida who had seen his miracles and yet did not repent.

Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, **if you had been here, my brother would not have died.**” (John 11:21 ULT)

Martha said this to express her wish that Jesus would have come sooner so that her brother would not have died. But Jesus did not come sooner and her brother did die.

Hypothetical Situations in the Present

And no man puts new wine into old wineskins. **But if he did do that, the new wine would burst the wineskins, and it would be spilled out, and the wineskins would be destroyed.** (Luke 5:37 ULT)

Jesus told about what would happen if a person were to put new wine into old wineskins. But no one would do that. He used this imaginary situation as an example to show that there are times when it is unwise to mix new things with old things. He did this so that people could understand why his disciples were not fasting as people traditionally did.

Jesus said to them, “What man would there be among you, who, **if he had just one sheep, and if this sheep fell into a deep hole on the Sabbath, would not grasp hold of it and lift it out?**” (Matthew 12:11 ULT)

Jesus asked the religious leaders what they would do on the Sabbath if one of their sheep fell into a hole. He was not saying that their sheep would fall into a hole. He used this imaginary situation to show them that they were wrong to judge him for healing people on the Sabbath.

Hypothetical Situation in the Future

Unless those days are shortened, no flesh would be saved. But for the sake of the elect, those days will be shortened. (Matthew 24:22 ULT)

Jesus was talking about a future time when very bad things would happen. He told what would happen if those days of trouble were to last a long time. He did this to show how bad those days will be—so bad that if they lasted a long time, no one would be saved. But then he clarified that God will shorten those days of trouble so that the elect (those he has chosen) will be saved.

Expressing Emotion About a Hypothetical Situation

People sometimes talk about hypothetical situations in order to express regrets and wishes. Regrets are about the past and wishes are about the present and future.

The Israelites said to them, “**If only we had died by Yahweh’s hand in the land of Egypt when we were sitting by the pots of meat and were eating bread to the full.** For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill our whole community with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3 ULT)

Here the Israelites were afraid that they would have to suffer and die of hunger in the wilderness, and so they wished that they had stayed in Egypt and died there with full stomachs. They were complaining, expressing regret that this had not happened.

I know what you have done, and that you are neither cold nor hot. **I wish that you were either cold or hot!** (Revelation 3:15 ULT)

Jesus wished that the people were either hot or cold, but they are neither. He was rebuking them, expressing anger at this.

Translation Strategies

Find out how people speaking your language show:

- that something could have happened, but did not.
- that something could be true now, but is not.
- that something could happen in the future, but will not unless something changes.
- that they wish for something, but it does not happen.
- that they regret that something did not happen.

Use your language's ways of showing these kinds of things.

You may also want to watch the video at https://ufw.io/figs_hypo.

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Referenced in: [Job 3:13](#); [Job 30:24](#); [Job 34:31](#); [Job 34:32](#); [Job 34:33](#)

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: [Introduction to Job](#); [Job 1:1](#); [Job 1:3](#); [Job 1:4](#); [Job 1:6](#); [Job 1:8](#); [Job 1:11](#); [Job 1:14](#); [Job 1:15](#); [Job 1:20](#); [Job 2:1](#); [Job 2:3](#); [Job 2:5](#); [Job 2:12](#); [Job 3:1](#); [Job 3:10](#); [Job 3:20](#); [Job 4:6](#); [Job 4:13](#); [Job 4:17](#); [Job 4:19](#); [Job 5:7](#); [Job 5:16](#); [Job 5:25](#); [Job 6:5](#); [Job 6:6](#); [Job 6:7](#); [Job 6:12](#); [Job 6:13](#); [Job 6:14](#); [Job 6:15](#); [Job 6:18](#); [Job 6:30](#); [Job 7:6](#); [Job 7:7](#); [Job 7:8](#); [Job 7:16](#); [Job 8:4](#); [Job 8:9](#); [Job 9:4](#); [Job 9:14](#); [Job 9:18](#); [Job 9:19](#); [Job 9:21](#); [Job 9:22](#); [Job 9:25](#); [Job 9:35](#); [Job 10:1](#); [Job 10:4](#); [Job 10:5](#); [Job 10:7](#); [Job 10:13](#); [Job 10:16](#); [Job 11:2](#); [Job 11:5](#); [Job 11:6](#); [Job 11:7](#); [Job 12:2](#); [Job 12:3](#); [Job 12:12](#); [Job 12:14](#); [Job 13:5](#); [Job 13:8](#); [Job 13:10](#); [Job 13:24](#); [Job 14:1](#); [Job 14:2](#); [Job 14:5](#); [Job 14:13](#); [Job 14:14](#); [Job 14:18](#); [Job 14:20](#); [Job 15:9](#); [Job 15:10](#); [Job 15:16](#); [Job 15:20](#); [Job 15:23](#); [Job 15:25](#); [Job 15:26](#); [Job 15:29](#); [Job 16:14](#); [Job 16:22](#); [Job 17:1](#); [Job 17:2](#); [Job 17:9](#); [Job 17:11](#); [Job 18:13](#); [Job 18:14](#); [Job 18:20](#); [Job 19:3](#); [Job 19:7](#); [Job 19:13](#); [Job 19:22](#); [Job 19:23](#); [Job 20:5](#); [Job 20:22](#); [Job 20:28](#); [Job 21:8](#); [Job 21:13](#); [Job 21:19](#); [Job 21:23](#); [Job 21:25](#); [Job 21:29](#); [Job 21:30](#); [Job 21:31](#); [Job 22:3](#); [Job 22:8](#); [Job 22:12](#); [Job 22:20](#); [Job 22:27](#); [Job 22:28](#); [Job 23:3](#); [Job 24:1](#); [Job 24:8](#); [Job 24:14](#); [Job 24:16](#); [Job 24:18](#); [Job 24:24](#); [Job 24:25](#); [Job 25:6](#); [Job 27:5](#); [Job 27:6](#); [Job 27:7](#); [Job 27:9](#); [Job 27:11](#); [Job 27:12](#); [Job 27:19](#); [Job 28:8](#); [Job 28:9](#); [Job 28:25](#); [Job 29:2](#); [Job 29:4](#); [Job 29:8](#); [Job 30:3](#); [Job 30:8](#); [Job 30:13](#); [Job 30:17](#); [Job 30:24](#); [Job 30:25](#); [Job 30:29](#); [Job 31:1](#); [Job 31:9](#); [Job 31:14](#); [Job 31:27](#); [Job 31:29](#); [Job 31:35](#); [Job 31:36](#); [Job 31:39](#); [Job 32:4](#); [Job 32:6](#); [Job 32:21](#); [Job 32:22](#); [Job 33:16](#); [Job](#)

33:23; Job 33:25; Job 34:10; Job 34:11; Job 34:17; Job 34:19; Job 34:28; Job 34:33; Job 34:36; Job 35:10; Job 35:12; Job 35:13; Job 35:15; Job 36:3; Job 36:10; Job 36:11; Job 36:16; Job 36:24; Job 36:32; Job 37:12; Job 38:7; Job 38:12; Job 38:21; Job 38:23; Job 38:30; Job 38:33; Job 38:35; Job 39:9; Job 39:10; Job 39:13; Job 39:18; Job 39:25; Job 39:27; Job 39:29; Job 40:9; Job 40:12; Job 40:19; Job 41:3; Job 41:4; Job 41:9; Job 41:13; Job 41:26; Job 41:34; Job 42:8; Job 42:9; Job 42:10; Job 42:14; Job 42:15

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: [Job 1:11](#); [Job 2:5](#); [Job 7:7](#); [Job 12:7](#); [Job 12:8](#); [Job 22:24](#); [Job 37:14](#)

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: [Job 3:6](#); [Job 5:23](#); [Job 10:11](#); [Job 15:18](#); [Job 16:9](#); [Job 20:10](#); [Job 29:18](#); [Job 29:25](#); [Job 31:20](#); [Job 36:14](#); [Job 38:10](#); [Job 38:20](#); [Job 38:35](#); [Job 39:6](#); [Job 41:2](#)

Introduction of a New Event

Description

When people tell a story, they tell about an event or a series of events. Often they put certain information at the beginning of the story, such as who the story is about, when it happened, and where it happened. This information that the writer gives before the events of the story begin is called the setting of the story. Some new events in a story also have a setting because they might involve new people, new times, and new places. In some languages, people also tell if they saw the event or heard about it from someone else.

This page answers the question: *How do we introduce a new event in a story?*

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

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

[Order of Events \(UTA PDF\)](#)

When your people tell about events, what information do they give at the beginning? Is there a certain order that they put it in? In your translation, you will need to follow the way your language introduces new information at the beginning of a story or a new event rather than the way the source language did that. In this way your translation will sound natural and communicate clearly in your language.

Examples From the Bible

In the days of Herod, king of Judea, **there was a certain priest named Zechariah**, from the division of Abijah. And **his wife was** from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (Luke 1:5 ULT)

The verses above introduce a story about Zechariah. The first bolded phrase tells when it happened, and the next two bolded phrases introduce the main people. The next two verses go on to explain that Zechariah and Elizabeth were old and did not have any children. All of this is the setting. Then the phrase “And it happened that” in Luke 1:8 helps to introduce the first event in this story:

And it happened that in his performing as priest before God, in the order of his division, according to the custom of the priesthood, he came up by lot to enter into the temple of the Lord to burn incense. (Luke 1:8-9 ULT)

The birth of Jesus Christ happened in the following way. His mother, Mary, was engaged to marry Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18 ULT)

The bolded sentence above makes it explicit that a story about Jesus is being introduced. The story will tell about how the birth of Jesus happened.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, learned men from the east arrived in Jerusalem. (Matthew 2:1 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that the events concerning the learned men happened **after** Jesus was born.

Now in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. (Matthew 3:1-22 ULT)

The bolded phrase above shows that John the Baptist came preaching around the time of the previous events. It is probably very general and refers to when Jesus lived in Nazareth.

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River to John, to be baptized by him. (Matthew 3:13 ULT)

The word “then” shows that Jesus came to the Jordan River some time after the events in the previous verses.

Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

The author first introduced the new person and then told about what he did and when he did it. In some languages, it might be more natural to tell about the time first.

6 Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. 7 Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Verse 6 is a statement of the events that happen in the rest of chapter 7. Chapter 6 already told about how God told Noah that there would be a flood, and how Noah prepared for it. Chapter 7 verse 6 introduces the part of the story that tells about Noah and his family and the animals going into the ship, the rain starting, and the rain flooding the earth. Some languages might need to make it clear that this verse simply introduces the event, or move this verse after verse 7. Verse 6 is not one of the events of the story. The people went into the ship before the flood came.

Translation Strategies

If the information given at the beginning of a new event is clear and natural to your readers, consider translating it as it is in the ULT or UST. If not, consider one of these strategies:

- (1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.
- (2) If readers would expect certain information but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase to fill in that information, such as: "another time" or "someone."
- (3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language's way of showing that it is a summary.
- (4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, indicate that the event would actually happen later in the story.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Put the information that introduces the event in the order that your people put it.

Now there was **a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus, a Jewish leader**. This man came to Jesus at night. (John 3:1-2a ULT)

There was a **man whose name was Nicodemus. He was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**. One night he came to Jesus.

One night **a man named Nicodemus, who was a Pharisee and a member of the Jewish Council**, came to Jesus.

As he passed by, **he saw Levi the son of Alpheus, sitting** at the tax collector's tent, and he said to him ... (Mark 2:14a ULT)

As he passed by, **Levi the son of Alpheus was sitting** at the tax collector's tent. Jesus saw him and and said to him ...

As he passed by, **there was a man sitting** at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him ...

As he passed by, **there was a tax collector** sitting at the tax collector's tent. His name was Levi, and he was the son of Alpheus. Jesus saw him and said to him ...

(2) If readers would expect certain information, but it is not in the Bible, consider using an indefinite word or phrase such as “another time,” or “someone.”

Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT) — If people expect to be told something about when the new event happened, the phrase “after that” can help them see that it happened after the events already mentioned.

After that, when Noah was 600 years old, the flood came upon the earth.

Again he began to teach beside the sea. (Mark 4:1a ULT) — In chapter 3 Jesus was teaching at someone’s house. Readers may need to be told that this new event happened at another time, or that Jesus actually went to the sea.

Another time Jesus began to teach people again beside the sea.

Jesus went to the sea and **began to teach people again** there.

(3) If the introduction is a summary of the whole event, use your language’s way of showing that it is a summary.

Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. (Genesis 7:6 ULT)

Now this is what happened when Noah was 600 years old and the flood came upon the earth.

This part tells about what happened when the flood came upon the earth. It happened when Noah was 600 years old.

(4) If it would be strange in the target language to give a summary of the event at the beginning, show that the event will actually happen later in the story.

Noah was 600 years old when the flood came upon the earth. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because of the waters of the flood. (Genesis 7:6-7 ULT)

Now this is what happened when Noah was 600 years old. Noah, his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives went into the ark together because **God had said that the waters of the flood would come.**

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Background Information \(UTA PDF\)](#)

[Introduction of New and Old Participants \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Job 1:6](#); [Job 1:13](#); [Job 2:1](#); [Job 32:2](#); [Job 38:1](#); [Job 42:7](#)

Introduction of New and Old Participants

Description

The first time that people or things are mentioned in a story, they are **new participants**. After that, whenever they are mentioned, they are **old participants**.

Now **there was a man from the Pharisees whose name was Nicodemus** ... **This man** came to Jesus at night ... Jesus replied and said to **him** ... (John 3:1, 2a, 3a)

This page answers the question: *Why cannot the readers of my translation understand who the author was writing about?*

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

[Parts of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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

The first bolded phrase introduces Nicodemus as a new participant. After being introduced, he is then referred to as “This man” and “him” when he has become an old participant.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

In order to make your translation clear and natural, it is necessary to refer to the participants in such a way that people will know if they are new participants or participants that they have already read about. Different languages have different ways of doing this. You must follow the way that your language does this, not the way that the source language does this.

Examples From the Bible

New Participants

Often the most important new participant is introduced with a phrase that says that he existed, such as “There was a man,” as in the example below. The phrase “There was” tells us that this man existed. The word “a” in “a man” tells us that the author is speaking about him for the first time. The rest of the sentence tells where this man was from, who his family was, and what his name was.

Now there was a man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. (Judges 13:2a ULT)

A new participant who is not the most important participant is often introduced in relation to the more important person who was already introduced. In the example below, Manoah’s wife is simply referred to as “his wife.” This phrase shows her relationship to him.

Now there was one man from Zorah, of the families of the Danites, and his name was Manoah. **His wife** was barren and she had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Sometimes a new participant is introduced simply by name because the author assumes that the readers know who the person is. In the first verse of 1 Kings, the author assumes that his readers know who King David is, so there is no need to explain who he is.

Now King David was old, he had advanced in the days, and they covered him with the garments, but it was not warm enough for him. (1 Kings 1:1 ULT)

Old Participants

A person who has already been brought into the story can be referred to with a pronoun after that. In the example below, Manoah is referred to with the pronoun “his,” and his wife is referred to with the pronoun “she.”

His **wife** was barren and **she** had never given birth. (Judges 13:2 ULT)

Old participants can also be referred to in other ways, depending on what is happening in the story. In the example below, the story is about bearing a son, and Manoah's wife is referred to by the noun phrase "the wife."

The angel of Yahweh appeared to **the wife** and he said to her ... (Judges 13:3a ULT)

If the old participant has not been mentioned for a while, or if there could be confusion between participants, the author may use the participant's name again. In the example below, Manoah is referred to by his name, which the author has not used since verse 2.

Then **Manoah** prayed to Yahweh. (Judges 13:8a ULT)

Some languages place an affix on the verb that tells something about the subject. In some of those languages, people do not always use noun phrases or pronouns for old participants when they are the subject of the sentence. The marker on the verb gives enough information for the listener to understand who the subject is. (See [Verbs](#).)

Translation Strategies

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language's ways of introducing new participants.
- (2) If it is not clear to whom a pronoun refers, use a noun phrase or name.
- (3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the participant is new, use one of your language's ways of introducing new participants.

Then Joseph, who was called Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated as Son of Encouragement), a Levite from Cyprus by birth ... (Acts 4:36-37 ULT) — Starting the sentence with Joseph's name when he has not been introduced yet might be confusing in some languages.

There was a man from Cyprus who was a Levite. His name was Joseph, and he was given the name Barnabas by the apostles (that is, being interpreted, Son of Encouragement). There was a Levite from Cyprus whose name was Joseph. The apostles gave him the name Barnabas, which means Son of encouragement.

- (2) If it is not clear who a pronoun refers to, use a noun phrase or name.

And it happened that when he was praying in a certain place, when he stopped, one of his disciples said to him, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John also taught his disciples." (Luke 11:1 ULT) — Since this is the first verse in a chapter, readers might wonder who "he" refers to.

It happened when **Jesus** finished praying in a certain place, that one of his disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray just as John taught his disciples."

- (3) If an old participant is referred to by name or a noun phrase, and people wonder if this is another new participant, try using a pronoun instead. If a pronoun is not needed because people would understand it clearly from the context, then leave out the pronoun.

Joseph's master took Joseph and put him in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and Joseph stayed there. (Genesis 39:20) — Since Joseph is the main person in the story, some languages might prefer the pronoun.

Joseph's master took **him** and put **him** in prison, in the place where all the king's prisoners were put, and **he** stayed there in the prison.

Next we recommend you learn about:

Pronouns — When to Use Them ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Job 1:1](#); [Job 32:2](#); [Job 41:1](#)

Irony

Description

Irony is a figure of speech in which the sense that the speaker intends to communicate is actually the opposite of the literal meaning of the words. Sometimes a person does this by using someone else's words, but in a way that communicates that he does not agree with them. People do this to emphasize how different something is from what it should be, or how someone else's belief about something is wrong or foolish. It is often humorous.

This page answers the question: *What is irony and how can I translate it?*

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

Figures of Speech (UTA PDF)

Then Jesus answered and said to them, "People who are well do not have need of a physician, but those who have sickness. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."
(Luke 5:31-32 ULT)

When Jesus spoke of "the righteous," he was not referring to people who were truly righteous, but to people who wrongly believed that they were righteous. By using irony, Jesus communicated that they were wrong to think that they were better than others and did not need to repent.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

If someone does not realize that a speaker is using irony, he will think that the speaker actually believes what he is saying. He will understand the passage to mean the opposite of what it was intended to mean.

Examples From the Bible

How well you reject the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9b ULT)

Here Jesus praises the Pharisees for doing something that is obviously wrong. Through irony, he communicates the opposite of praise: He communicates that the Pharisees, who take great pride in keeping the commandments, are so far from God that they do not even recognize that their traditions are breaking God's commandments. The use of irony makes the Pharisee's sin more obvious and startling.

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. **"Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled."** (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

People worshiped idols as if their idols had knowledge or power, and Yahweh was angry at them for doing that. So he used irony and challenged their idols to tell what would happen in the future. He knew that the idols could not do this, but by speaking as if they could, he mocked the idols, making their inability more obvious, and rebuked the people for worshiping them.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is many!** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Job thought that he was wise. Yahweh used irony to show Job that he was not so wise. The two phrases in bold above are irony. They emphasize the opposite of what they say, because they are so obviously false. They emphasize that Job could not possibly answer God's questions about the creation of light because Job was not born until many, many years later.

Already you are satisfied! Already you have become rich! **You began to reign** apart from us, and I wish you really did reign, so that we also might reign with you. (1 Corinthians 4:8 ULT)

The Corinthians considered themselves to be very wise, self-sufficient, and not in need of any instruction from the Apostle Paul. Paul used irony, speaking as if he agreed with them, to show how proudly they were acting and how far from being wise they really were.

Translation Strategies

If the irony would be understood correctly in your language, translate it as it is stated. If not, here are some other strategies.

- (1) Translate the irony in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.
- (2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony. (Remember: The true meaning of the irony is **not** found in the literal words of the speaker, but instead the true meaning is found in the opposite of the literal meaning of the speaker's words.)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate it in a way that shows that the speaker is saying what someone else believes.

How well you reject the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

You think that you are doing well when you reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!

or:

You act like it is good to reject God's commandment so you may keep your tradition!

I did not come to call **the righteous**, but sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32 ULT)

I did not come to call **people who think that they are righteous** to repentance, but to call people who know that they are sinners to repentance.

- (2) Translate the actual, intended meaning of the statement of irony.

How well you reject the commandment of God so that you may keep your tradition! (Mark 7:9a ULT)

You are doing a terrible thing when you reject the commandment of God so you may keep your tradition!

"Present your case," says Yahweh; "present your best arguments for your idols," says the King of Jacob. "**Let them bring us their own arguments; have them come forward and declare to us what will happen, so we may know these things well. Have them tell us of earlier predictive declarations, so we can reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.**" (Isaiah 41:21-22 ULT)

'Present your case,' says Yahweh; 'present your best arguments for your idols,' says the King of Jacob. **Can your idols bring us their own arguments or come forward to declare to us what will happen** so we may know these things well? **No!** We cannot hear them because **they cannot speak** to tell us their earlier predictive declarations, so we cannot reflect on them and know how they were fulfilled.

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You know, for you were born then, and the number of your days is many!** (Job 38:20-21 ULT)

Can you lead light and darkness to their places of work? Can you find the way back to their houses for them? **You act like you know how light and darkness were created, as if you were there; as if you are as old as creation, but you are not!**

Next we recommend you learn about:

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

Referenced in: [Job 5:1](#); [Job 8:7](#); [Job 8:19](#); [Job 9:29](#); [Job 11:12](#); [Job 12:2](#); [Job 15:26](#); [Job 16:5](#); [Job 21:3](#); [Job 24:20](#); [Job 26:2](#); [Job 26:3](#); [Job 26:4](#); [Job 37:19](#); [Job 38:3](#); [Job 38:15](#); [Job 38:21](#); [Job 40:7](#)

Irregular Use of Tenses

Description

This page answers the question: *How do I translate tenses that are unexpected?*

Normally, languages indicate when an event happens by marking it as past, present, or future (or some subset of those categories) through using different verb tenses. But sometimes speakers use those verb tenses in other ways to draw special attention to what they are saying. This article will discuss three ways that this happens in the Bible.

Past For Future

In the Bible, sometimes the past tense is used to refer to things that will happen in the future. This is a figure of speech that is used in prophecy to show that the event will certainly happen. It is sometimes called the “predictive past” or “prophetic perfect.”

Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding; their honored leaders go hungry, and their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

In the example above, the people of Israel had not yet gone into captivity, but God spoke of their going into captivity as if it had already happened because he had decided that they certainly would go into captivity.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Speakers of languages that do not use the past tense in prophecy to refer to future events may think that these are events that have already happened.

Examples From the Bible

Now Jericho was tightly closed because of the sons of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. Yahweh said to Joshua, “See, I have delivered Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand.” (Joshua 6:1-2 ULT)

For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given; and the rule will be on his shoulder. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

In the examples above, God spoke of things that would happen in the future as if they had already happened.

But even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, “Look! The Lord came with thousands and thousands of his holy ones.” (Jude 1:14 ULT)

Enoch was speaking of something that would happen far in the future, but he used the past tense when he said, “the Lord came.”

Present For Past

In the Bible, sometimes the present tense is used to refer to events that happened in the past. This is a figure of speech that makes these events more vivid or prominent for the reader. The effect can be to draw the reader into the story because these events are told as though they are happening now. The reader, however, knows that the events happened in the past. This is sometimes called the “historical present.”

Now the mother-in-law of Simon was lying down, being sick with a fever, and immediately they speak to him concerning her. (Mark 1:30 ULT)

In the example above, Mark had been narrating events that happened in the past, using the past tense. But when he came to the part about the disciples speaking to Jesus about Simon's mother-in-law, he changed from past tense to present tense.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Speakers of languages that do not use the present tense to refer to past events may think that these events are happening now or that the Bible translation makes no sense.

Examples From the Bible

And Simon and the ones with him searched for him 37 and found him and say to him, "Everyone is seeking you." 38 And he says to them, "Let us go elsewhere, (Mark 1:36-38 ULT)

As in the above example, the historical present is often used to make direct speech stand out from the narrative.

And he enters into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbaths, having entered into the synagogue, he began to teach. (Mark 1:21 ULT)

As in the above example, the historical present sometimes serves to set the scene for a new set of events. By using the historical present in this way, the writer draws the reader into the scene, and then relates the events using the past tense.

Present For Future

In the Bible, sometimes the present tense is used for a future event. Usually, this is to communicate that the event will happen very soon. Also, like the predictive past, this can communicate that the event is sure to happen or that the speaker is fully committed to making the event happen. This is sometimes called the "imminent future."

And Moses said, "Thus says Yahweh: 'About the middle of the night I am going out in the midst of Egypt, (Exodus 11:4 ULT)

In the example above, Yahweh uses the present tense for something that he will do soon.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Speakers of languages that do not use the present tense to refer to future events may think that these events are happening at the time of speaking or writing or that the Bible translation is confusing or wrong.

Examples From the Bible

For behold me, raising up the Chaldeans, that fierce and impetuous nation... (Habakkuk 1:6 ULT)

Therefore, remember from where you have fallen and repent and do the first works. But if not, I am coming to you and I will remove your lampstand from its place—if you do not repent. (Revelation 2:5 ULT)

In the examples above, God speaks of a future event as though he is doing it in the present. This is a way of emphasizing the certainty of the event.

Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding; their honored leaders go hungry, and their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

In the example above, the present tense continues the sense of the predictive past, communicating future events that are sure to happen.

Translation Strategies

If the tense that is used in the Literal Translation would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.
- (2) Use the past tense to refer to past events.
- (3) Use the tense that your language commonly uses to communicate the time of the event.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.

For to us a child **has been born**, to us a son **has been given**. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

For to us a child **will be born**, to us a son **will be given**.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, **I have delivered** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, **I will deliver** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand."

And Moses said, "Thus says Yahweh: 'About the middle of the night **I am going out** in the midst of Egypt, (Exodus 11:4 ULT)

And Moses said, "Thus says Yahweh: 'About the middle of the night **I will go out** in the midst of Egypt,

- (2) Use the past tense to refer to past events.

And Simon and the ones with him searched for him and found him and **say** to him, "Everyone is seeking you." And he **says** to them, "Let us go elsewhere, (Mark 1:36-38 ULT)

And Simon and the ones with him searched for him and found him and **said** to him, "Everyone is seeking you." And he **said** to them, "Let us go elsewhere,

And he **enters** into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbaths, having entered into the synagogue, he began to teach. (Mark 1:21 ULT)

And he **entered** into Capernaum, and immediately on the Sabbaths, having entered into the synagogue, he began to teach.

- (3) Use the tense that your language commonly uses to communicate the time of the event.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, **I have delivered** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, **I am delivering** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand."

Or:

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, **I am about to deliver** Jericho and its king and its powerful soldiers into your hand."

And Moses said, "Thus says Yahweh: 'About the middle of the night **I am going out** in the midst of Egypt, (Exodus 11:4 ULT)

And Moses said, "Thus says Yahweh: 'About the middle of the night **I will be going out** in the midst of Egypt,

Or:

And Moses said, "Thus says Yahweh: 'About the middle of the night **I shall certainly go out** in the midst of Egypt,

"

Referenced in: [Job 3:13](#); [Job 23:7](#)

Kinship

Description

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

Kinship terms refer to those words used to describe people related to one another in familial relationships. These terms vary widely in their specificity from language to language. They range from the (Western) nuclear or immediate family (father-son, husband-wife) out to broad clan relationships in other cultures.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Depending on the language translators may need to use specific terms to designate the accurate kinship relationship. In some languages a different term may be used based on siblings' birth order. In others, the side of the family (father's or mother's), age, marital status, etc. may determine the term used. Different terms may be used based on the gender of the speaker and/or addressee. Translators may need to make sure they know the exact relationship between two related people in the Bible to find the correct term. Sometimes these terms are difficult even for native speakers to remember and translators may need to seek community help in finding the correct term. Another complicating issue is that the Bible may not give enough information about the relationship for translators to determine the correct term in the language being translated into. In this case, translators will have to use a more general term or simply pick a satisfactory term based on the limited information available.

Sometimes terms that seem like kinship terms are used for people who are not necessarily related. For instance, an older person may refer to a younger man or woman as "my son" or "my daughter."

Examples from the Bible

Then Yahweh said to Cain, "Where is Abel **your brother**?" He said, "I do not know. Am I **my brother's** keeper?" (Genesis 4:9 ULT)

Abel was Cain's younger brother.

Jacob sent and called Rachel and Leah to the field to his flock and said to them, "I see **your father's** attitude toward me has changed, but the God of my father has been with me." (Genesis 31:4-5 ULT)

Jacob is referring here to his father-in-law. In some languages there may be a specific term for a man's father-in-law, however, in this case it is better to retain the form **your father** as Jacob may be using it to distance himself from Laban.

And Moses was shepherding the flock of Jethro **his father-in-law**, the priest of Midian. (Exodus 3:1a ULT)

Unlike the previous instance, if your language has a term for a man's father-in-law this is a good place to use it.

And **his sister** stationed herself at a distance to know what would be done to him. (Exodus 2:4 ULT)

From context we know that this was Miriam, Moses's older sister. In some languages this may require a specific term. In others, the term for older sister may be only used when the younger sibling is addressing and/or referring to his or her sister.

Then she and **her daughters-in-law** arose to return from the fields of Moab (Ruth 1:6a ULT)

Ruth & Orpah are Naomi's daughters-in-law.

Then she said, “Look, your sister-in-law has turned back to her people and to her gods.” (Ruth 1:15 ULT)

Orpah had been the wife of Ruth’s husband’s brother. This may be a different term in your language than if she had been Ruth’s husband’s sister.

Then Boaz said to Ruth, “Will you not listen to me, **my daughter?**” (Ruth 2:8a ULT)

Boaz is not Ruth’s father; he is simply using the term to address a younger woman.

And behold, **your relative** Elizabeth—she also has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren. (Luke 1:36 ULT)

While the KJV translated this as **cousin**, the term simply means a related woman.

Translation Strategies

- (1) Find out the exact relationship specified and translate using the term your language uses.
- (2) If the text does not specify the relationship as clearly as your language would, either:
 - (a) settle on a more general term.
 - (b) use a specific term if required by your language, choosing the one that is most likely to be correct.

Translation Strategies Applied

This is not an issue in English, so the following illustrations draw on other languages.

In Korean, there are several terms for brother and sister; the use of them depends on the speaker’s (or referent’s) sex and birth order. Examples are from the Korean Living Bible, found on biblegateway.com

Genesis 30:1 Rachel is jealous of her “eonni,” which is the term a woman uses for her older sister.

Genesis 34:31 Simeon and Levi refer to Dinah as “nui,” a general term for sister.

Genesis 37:16 Joseph refers to his brothers as “hyeong,” which is the term a man uses for his older brother(s).

Genesis 45:12 Joseph refers to Benjamin as “dongsaeng,” which roughly means sibling, usually younger.

In Russian, in-law terms are complex. For instance, “nevéstka” is the term for a brother’s (or brother-in-law’s) wife; a woman uses the same term for her daughter-in-law but her husband would call the same daughter-in-law “snoxá.” Examples from the Russian Synodal Version.

Genesis 38:25 Tamar sends a message to her father-in-law, Judah. The term used is “svekor.” This is used for a woman’s husband’s father.

Exodus 3:1 Moses is watching his father-in-law’s herd. The term used is “test’.” This is used for a man’s wife’s father.

”

Referenced in: [Job 42:16](#)

Litany

Description

A litany is a figure of speech in which the various components of a thing are listed in a series of very similar statements. The speaker does this to indicate that what he is saying should be understood as comprehensive and without exceptions.

This page answers the question: *What is the figure of speech called litany?*

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

Figures of Speech (UTA PDF)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Many languages do not use litanies, and readers could be confused by them. They may wonder why the speaker seems to be saying the same thing over and over again.

Examples From the Bible

Though they dig into Sheol, there my hand will take them. Though they climb up to heaven, there I will bring them down. Though they hide on the top of Carmel, there I will search and take them. Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea, there will I give orders to the serpent, and it will bite them. Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them, there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them. (Amos 9:2-4 ULT)

In this passage Yahweh is telling the people of Israel that when he punishes them, none of them will escape.

But you should not have looked on the day of your brother, on the day of his misfortune. And you should not have rejoiced over the sons of Judah in the day of their perishing. And you should not have made your mouth great in a day of distress. You should not have entered the gate of my people in the day of their calamity. Yes, you! You should not have looked on his evil in the day of his calamity. And you women should not have looted his wealth in the day of his calamity. And you should not have stood at the crossroads to cut down his fugitives. And you should not have delivered up his survivors in a day of distress. (Obadiah 1:12-14)

In this passage Yahweh is telling the people of Edom that they should have helped the people of Judah when they were conquered by the Babylonians.

Translation Strategies

If the litany is understood as it is in the ULT, then translate the litany as it is. If it is not understood, then try one or more of the following strategies.

- (1) Often in the Bible there will be a general statement at the beginning or end of a litany that sums up its overall meaning. You can format that statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that gives the meaning of the litany.
- (2) You can put each sentence of the litany on a separate line. Also, if each sentence in the litany has two parts, you can format the litany so that the equivalent parts of each sentence line up. Use this or any other type of formatting that will show that each sentence is reinforcing the same meaning.
- (3) You can eliminate words like "and," "but," and "or" at the beginning of sentences so that it will be clearer that the component parts of the litany are all being listed in a row.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) combined with (3):

Often in the Bible there will be a general statement at the beginning or end of a litany that sums up its overall meaning. You can format that statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that gives the meaning of the litany;

You can eliminate words like “and,” “but,” and “or” at the beginning of sentences so that it will be clearer that the component parts of the litany are all being listed in a row.

You did nothing to help the Israelites when strangers carried away their wealth. They conquered all the cities of Judah, and they even plundered Jerusalem. And you were just as bad as those foreigners, because you did nothing to help:

You should not have looked on the day of your brother, on the day of his misfortune. You should not have rejoiced over the sons of Judah in the day of their perishing. You should not have made your mouth great in a day of distress. You should not have entered the gate of my people in the day of their calamity. Yes, you! You should not have looked on his evil in the day of his calamity. You women should not have looted his wealth in the day of his calamity. You should not have stood at the crossroads to cut down his fugitives. You should not have delivered up his survivors in a day of distress. (Obadiah 1:11-14)

In the above example, verse 11 provides the summary and meaning for the litany that follows in verses 12-14.

(1) combined with (2):

Often in the Bible there will be a general statement at the beginning or end of a litany that sums up its overall meaning. You can format that statement in a way that will show that it is a summary statement that gives the meaning of the litany;

You can put each sentence of the litany on a separate line. Also, if each sentence in the litany has two parts, you can format the litany so that the equivalent parts of each sentence line up. Use this or any other type of formatting that will show that each sentence is reinforcing the same meaning.

Not one of them will get away, not one of them will escape:

Though they dig into Sheol,	there my hand will take them.
Though they climb up to heaven,	there I will bring them down.
Though they hide on the top of Carmel,	there I will search and take them.
Though they are hidden from my sight in the bottom of the sea,	there will I give orders to the serpent, and it will bite them.
Though they go into captivity, driven by their enemies before them,	there will I give orders to the sword, and it will kill them.

(Amos 9:1b-4 ULT)

In the above example, the sentence before the litany explains its overall meaning. That sentence can be placed as an introduction. The second half of each sentence can be formatted in a descending staircase pattern as above, or lined up evenly like the first half of each sentence, or in another way. Use whatever format best shows that these sentences are all communicating the same truth, that it is not possible to escape from God.

“

Referenced in: [Job 26:7](#)

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: [Job 36:6](#); [Job 36:7](#); [Job 37:23](#); [Job 39:24](#); [Job 41:12](#)

Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit

Description

Some languages have ways of saying things that are natural for them but sound strange when translated into Other Languages. One of the reasons for this is that some languages say things explicitly that some Other Languages would leave as implicit information.

This page answers the question: *What can I do if some of the explicit information seems confusing, unnatural, or unnecessary in our language?*

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

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information (UTA PDF)

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

If you translate all of the explicit information from the source language into the explicit information in the target language, it could sound foreign, unnatural, or perhaps even unintelligent if the target language would not make that information explicit. Instead, it is best to leave that kind of information implicit in the target language.

Examples from the Bible

And Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower **to burn it with fire**. (Judges 9:52 ESV)

In Biblical Hebrew, it is normal to start most sentences with a conjunction such as “and” to show the connection between sentences. In English, it is not natural to do so, it is quite tiresome for the English reader, and it gives the impression that the author is uneducated. In English, it is best to leave the idea of connection between sentences implicit in most cases and not translate the conjunction explicitly.

In Biblical Hebrew, it is normal to say that something was burned with fire. In English, the idea of fire is included in the action of burning, and so it is unnatural to state both ideas explicitly. It is enough to say that something was burned and leave the idea of fire implicit.

But the centurion **answered and said**, “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof” (Matthew 8:8a ULT)

In the biblical languages, it was normal to introduce direct speech with two verbs of speaking. One verb indicated the action, and the other introduced the words of the speaker. English speakers do not do this, so it is very unnatural and confusing to use two verbs. For the English speaker, the idea of speaking is included in the idea of answering. Using two verbs in English implies two separate speeches, rather than just one. So in English, it is better to use only one verb of speaking.

Translation Strategies

- (1) If the explicit information of the source language sounds natural in the target language, then translate it as explicit information.
- (2) If the explicit information does not sound natural in the target language or seems unnecessary or confusing, leave the explicit information implicit. Only do this if the reader can understand this information from the context. You can test this by asking the reader a question about the passage.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) If the explicit information of the source language sounds natural in the target language, then translate it as explicit information.

- There would be no change to the text using this strategy, so no examples are given here.

(2) If the explicit information does not sound natural in the target language or seems unnecessary or confusing, make the explicit information implicit. Only do this if the reader can understand this information from the context. You can test this by asking the reader a question about the passage.

And Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it and drew near to the door of the tower **to burn it with fire.** (Judges 9:52 ESV)

Abimelech came to the tower and fought against it, and he approached the door of the tower **to burn it.** (Or) ... **to set it on fire.**

In English, it is clear that the action of this verse follows the action of the previous verse without the use of the connector “and” at the beginning, so it was omitted. Also, the words “with fire” were left out, because this information is communicated implicitly by the word “burn.” An alternative translation for “to burn it” is “to set it on fire.” It is not natural in English to use both “burn” and “fire,” so the English translator should choose only one of them. You can test if the readers understood the implicit information by asking, “How would the door burn?” If they knew it was by fire, then they have understood the implicit information. Or, if you chose the second option, you could ask, “What happens to a door that is set on fire?” If the readers answer, “It burns,” then they have understood the implicit information.

But the centurion **answered and said,** “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof” (Matthew 8:8a ULT)

The centurion **answered,** “Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof”

In English, the information that the centurion responded by speaking is included in the verb “answered,” so the verb “said” can be left implicit. You can test if the readers understood the implicit information by asking, “How did the centurion answer?” If they knew it was by speaking, then they have understood the implicit information.

He opened his mouth and taught them, saying, (Matthew 5:2 ULT)

He began to teach them, saying, (Or) He taught them, saying,

In English, it would be very strange to include the information that Jesus opened his mouth when he spoke. That information is included in the verbs “taught” and “saying,” so that phrase can be omitted and that information left implicit. However, “he opened his mouth” is an idiom that indicates the beginning of a speech, so that information may be included, or it may also be left implicit.

Next we recommend you learn about:

When to Keep Information Implicit ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: Job 1:15; Job 1:21; Job 8:2; Job 20:2; Job 21:17; Job 24:21; Job 28:22; Job 37:21; Job 38:4; Job 38:8

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: [Job 2:7](#); [Job 3:19](#); [Job 4:20](#); [Job 11:8](#); [Job 11:9](#); [Job 12:16](#); [Job 18:20](#); [Job 26:7](#); [Job 28:24](#)

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](#).

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Referenced in: Job 1:1; Job 1:5; Job 1:8; Job 1:10; Job 1:12; Job 1:21; Job 2:3; Job 2:7; Job 2:12; Job 3:4; Job 3:10; Job 3:21; Job 3:23; Job 4:4; Job 4:6; Job 4:8; Job 4:9; Job 4:10; Job 4:11; Job 4:19; Job 4:21; Job 5:1; Job 5:3; Job 5:4; Job 5:5; Job 5:6; Job 5:7; Job 5:8; Job 5:10; Job 5:11; Job 5:13; Job 5:14; Job 5:15; Job 5:18; Job 5:20; Job 5:21; Job 6 General Notes; Job 6:2; Job 6:4; Job 6:9; Job 6:10; Job 6:12; Job 6:15; Job 6:21; Job 6:24; Job 6:27; Job 6:29; Job 7 General Notes; Job 7:3; Job 7:4; Job 7:5; Job 7:7; Job 7:16; Job 7:17; Job 7:20; Job 8:2; Job 8:6; Job 8:8; Job 8:9; Job 8:10; Job 8:13; Job 8:14; Job 8:15; Job 8:16; Job 8:17; Job 8:19; Job 8:20; Job 8:21; Job 8:22; Job 9:4; Job 9:7; Job 9:8; Job 9:13; Job 9:17; Job 9:18; Job 9:23; Job 9:24; Job 9:26; Job 9:34; Job 10:3; Job 10:11; Job 10:13; Job 10:15; Job 10:17; Job 11:4; Job 11:6; Job 11:10; Job 11:12; Job 11:13; Job 11:14; Job 11:15; Job 11:17; Job 11:19; Job 12:3; Job 12:5; Job 12:15; Job 12:16; Job 12:17; Job 12:21; Job 12:22; Job 12:24; Job 12:25; Job 13:2; Job 13:4; Job 13:12; Job 13:13; Job 13:14; Job 13:15; Job 13:25; Job 13:26; Job 13:27; Job 14:1; Job 14:4; Job 14:6; Job 14:12; Job 14:13; Job 14:16; Job 14:17; Job 14:18; Job 14:20; Job 15:2; Job 15:11; Job 15:14; Job 15:15; Job 15:16; Job 15:22; Job 15:23; Job 15:26; Job 15:29; Job 15:30; Job 15:34; Job 15:35; Job 16:3; Job 16:9; Job 16:11; Job 16:12; Job 16:13; Job 16:14; Job 16:15; Job 16:17; Job 16:18; Job 17:1; Job 17:3; Job 17:4; Job 17:9; Job 17:12; Job 18:5; Job 18:6; Job 18:8; Job 18:9; Job 18:10; Job 18:12; Job 18:16; Job 18:17; Job 18:18; Job 18:20; Job 18:21; Job 19:2; Job 19:6; Job 19:8; Job 19:9; Job 19:10; Job 19:11; Job 19:12; Job 19:13; Job 19:14; Job 19:20; Job 19:23; Job 19:26; Job 19:27; Job 19:28; Job 20:6; Job 20:8; Job 20:12; Job 20:13; Job 20:14; Job 20:15; Job 20:16; Job 20:17; Job 20:20; Job 20:22; Job 20:23; Job 20:24; Job 20:25; Job 20:26; Job 20:28; Job 20:29; Job 21:14; Job 21:16; Job 21:17; Job 21:19; Job 21:20; Job 21:21; Job 21:25; Job 21:27; Job 21:31; Job 21:33; Job 22:3; Job 22:6; Job 22:9; Job 22:10; Job 22:11; Job 22:15; Job 22:16; Job 22:17; Job 22:18; Job 22:20; Job 22:22; Job 22:23; Job 22:24; Job 22:25; Job 22:28; Job 22:29; Job 22:30; Job 23:2; Job 23:4; Job 23:6; Job 23:10; Job 23:11; Job 23:12; Job 23:13; Job 23:16; Job 23:17; Job 24:13; Job 24:17; Job 24:18; Job 24:19; Job 24:21; Job 24:22; Job 24:23; Job 24:24; Job 25:3; Job 25:6; Job 26:6; Job 26:7; Job 26:8; Job 26:9; Job 26:10; Job 26:13; Job 26:14; Job 27:1; Job 27:5; Job 27:6; Job 27:7; Job 27:8; Job 27:13; Job 27:18; Job 27:20; Job 27:21; Job 28:5; Job 28:9; Job 28:11; Job 28:12; Job 28:23; Job 28:25; Job 28:28; Job 29:1; Job 29:3; Job 29:4; Job 29:6; Job 29:10; Job 29:14; Job 29:15; Job 29:16; Job 29:17; Job 29:18; Job 29:19; Job 29:20; Job 29:22; Job 29:23; Job 29:24; Job 29:25; Job 30:7; Job 30:11; Job 30:12; Job 30:13; Job 30:14; Job 30:16; Job 30:17; Job 30:18; Job 30:19; Job 30:22; Job 30:23; Job 30:26; Job 30:27; Job 30:29; Job 31:2; Job 31:4; Job 31:6; Job 31:7; Job 31:12; Job 31:26; Job 31:33; Job 31:35; Job 31:36; Job 31:37; Job 32:2; Job 32:3; Job 32:5; Job 32:18; Job 32:19; Job 33:3; Job 33:5; Job 33:6; Job 33:7; Job 33:11; Job 33:16; Job 33:17; Job 33:19; Job 34:5; Job 34:7; Job 34:10; Job 34:11; Job 34:14; Job 34:20; Job 34:21; Job 34:24; Job 34:25; Job 34:27; Job 34:29; Job 34:30; Job 34:34; Job 35:10; Job 35:12; Job 36:3; Job 36:5; Job 36:7; Job 36:10; Job 36:13; Job 36:16; Job 36:17; Job 36:20; Job 36:21; Job 36:23; Job 36:25; Job 36:27; Job 36:29; Job 36:30; Job 36:32; Job 36:33; Job 37:1; Job 37:2; Job 37:3; Job 37:4; Job 37:5; Job 37:7; Job 37:10; Job 37:18; Job 37:19; Job 37:20; Job 37:21; Job 37:24; Job 38:2; Job 38:3; Job 38:4; Job 38:6; Job 38:8; Job 38:9; Job 38:10; Job 38:15; Job 38:20; Job 38:25; Job 38:28; Job 38:29; Job 38:31; Job 38:33; Job 38:37; Job 38:41; Job 39:6; Job 39:19; Job 39:24; Job 39:25; Job 40:7; Job 40:9; Job 40:10; Job 40:11; Job 40:12; Job 40:18; Job 40:19; Job 41:10; Job 41:13; Job 41:14; Job 41:15; Job 41:17; Job 41:24; Job 41:28; Job 41:30; Job 41:31; Job 41:32; Job 41:34; Job 42:7; Job 42:11; Job 42:17

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](#).

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Referenced in: Job 1:11; Job 1:12; Job 1:15; Job 1:17; Job 1:21; Job 2:5; Job 2:6; Job 2:7; Job 2:10; Job 3:1; Job 3:9; Job 3:10; Job 3:11; Job 3:18; Job 3:20; Job 3:22; Job 4:2; Job 4:3; Job 4:4; Job 4:9; Job 4:12; Job 4:16; Job 5:3; Job 5:5; Job 5:12; Job 5:15; Job 5:20; Job 5:24; Job 6:7; Job 6:9; Job 6:23; Job 6:30; Job 7:2; Job 7:3; Job 7:11; Job 7:13; Job 7:15; Job 7:19; Job 7:21; Job 8:2; Job 9:4; Job 9:5; Job 9:9; Job 9:14; Job 9:16; Job 9:20; Job 9:24; Job 9:27; Job 10:4; Job 10:5; Job 10:15; Job 10:18; Job 10:19; Job 10:20; Job 10:21; Job 11:2; Job 11:4; Job 11:17; Job 11:20; Job 12:4; Job 12:6; Job 12:9; Job 12:10; Job 12:11; Job 12:20; Job 13:15; Job 13:16; Job 13:17; Job 13:20; Job 13:21; Job 14:1; Job 14:3; Job 15:3; Job 15:4; Job 15:5; Job 15:7; Job 15:10; Job 15:11; Job 15:12; Job 15:13; Job 15:14; Job 15:15; Job 15:21; Job 15:22; Job 15:32; Job 15:34; Job 16:4; Job 16:5; Job 16:11; Job 16:16; Job 17:7; Job 17:12; Job 17:13; Job 17:14; Job 17:16; Job 18:2; Job 18:3; Job 18:17; Job 19:2; Job 19:15; Job 19:16; Job 19:21; Job 19:23; Job 19:25; Job 19:29; Job 20:16; Job 20:22; Job 20:24; Job 20:25; Job 20:26; Job 21:2; Job 21:4; Job 21:8; Job 21:9; Job 21:16; Job 21:18; Job 21:21; Job 21:22; Job 21:30; Job 21:31; Job 21:33; Job 22:10; Job 22:13; Job 22:22; Job 22:24; Job 22:28; Job 22:30; Job 23:4; Job 23:5; Job 23:12; Job 23:15; Job 23:17; Job 24:18; Job 24:20; Job 24:25; Job 25:3; Job 25:5; Job 26:4; Job 26:7; Job 26:10; Job 27:3; Job 27:11; Job 27:14; Job 27:19; Job 27:22; Job 28:2; Job 28:3; Job 28:11; Job 28:26; Job 29:4; Job 29:9; Job 29:11; Job 29:22; Job 29:25; Job 30:3; Job 30:11; Job 30:12; Job 30:23; Job 30:31; Job 31:10; Job 31:20; Job 31:21; Job 31:26; Job 31:31; Job 31:39; Job 31:40; Job 32:1; Job 32:4; Job 32:11; Job 32:12; Job 32:14; Job 32:18; Job 32:19; Job 33:1; Job 33:3; Job 33:5; Job 33:8; Job 33:16; Job 33:18; Job 33:26; Job 33:28; Job 33:30; Job 33:32; Job 34:2; Job 34:3; Job 34:6; Job 34:15; Job 34:16; Job 34:19; Job 34:35; Job 34:37; Job 35:3; Job 35:4; Job 35:9; Job 35:14; Job 35:16; Job 36:2; Job 36:4; Job 36:18; Job 36:21; Job 36:26; Job 36:33; Job 37:13; Job 37:19; Job 37:22; Job 38:2; Job 38:14; Job 38:17; Job 38:34; Job 38:38; Job 38:39; Job 39:1; Job 39:3; Job 39:6; Job 39:8; Job 39:21; Job 39:22; Job 39:25; Job 39:26; Job 39:27; Job 40:9; Job 40:13; Job 40:14; Job 40:15; Job 40:19; Job 40:24; Job 41:8; Job 41:10; Job 41:13; Job 41:20; Job 41:22; Job 41:31; Job 42:7

Nominal Adjectives

Description

In some languages an adjective can be used to refer to a class of things that the adjective describes. When it does, it acts like a noun. For example, the word “rich” is an adjective. Here are two sentences that show that “rich” is an adjective.

The rich man had huge numbers of flocks and herds. (2 Samuel 12:2 ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes before the word “man” and describes “man.”

He will not be rich; his wealth will not last. (Job 15:29a ULT)

The adjective “rich” comes after the verb “be” and describes “He.”

Here is a sentence that shows that “rich” can also function as a noun.

The rich must not give more than the half shekel, and **the poor** must not give less. (Exodus 30:15b ULT)

In Exodus 30:15, the word “rich” acts as a noun in the phrase “the rich,” and it refers to rich people. The word “poor” also acts as a noun and refers to poor people.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate adjectives that act like nouns?*

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

Parts of Speech (UTA PDF)

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

- Many times in the Bible adjectives are used as nouns to describe a group of people.
- Some languages do not use adjectives in this way.
- Readers of these languages may think that the text is talking about one particular person when it is really talking about the group of people whom the adjective describes.

Examples From the Bible

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

“The righteous” here are people who are righteous, not one particular righteous person.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

“The meek” here are all people who are meek, not one particular meek person.

Translation Strategies

If your language uses adjectives as nouns to refer to a class of people, consider using the adjectives in this way. If it would sound strange, or if the meaning would be unclear or wrong, here is another option:

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use the adjective with a plural form of the noun that the adjective describes.

The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **the righteous**. (Psalms 125:3a ULT)

▮ The scepter of wickedness must not rule in the land of **righteous people**.

Blessed are **the meek**. (Matthew 5:5a ULT)

▮ Blessed are **people who are meek**.

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Referenced in: Job 2:10; Job 3:8; Job 3:17; Job 3:19; Job 3:20; Job 4:3; Job 4:7; Job 5:2; Job 5:3; Job 5:5; Job 5:9; Job 5:11; Job 5:12; Job 5:13; Job 5:15; Job 5:16; Job 6:6; Job 6:10; Job 6:14; Job 6:27; Job 8:13; Job 8:20; Job 8:22; Job 9:10; Job 9:22; Job 9:23; Job 9:25; Job 10:3; Job 12:5; Job 12:12; Job 12:19; Job 12:21; Job 12:22; Job 13:16; Job 14:4; Job 15:2; Job 15:5; Job 15:10; Job 15:16; Job 15:18; Job 15:20; Job 15:34; Job 16:11; Job 17:8; Job 17:9; Job 17:10; Job 18:5; Job 18:20; Job 18:21; Job 19:25; Job 20:5; Job 20:19; Job 20:20; Job 20:22; Job 21:7; Job 21:25; Job 21:28; Job 21:30; Job 22:7; Job 22:9; Job 22:18; Job 22:19; Job 22:21; Job 22:29; Job 22:30; Job 23:7; Job 24:3; Job 24:4; Job 24:6; Job 24:9; Job 24:12; Job 24:14; Job 24:21; Job 24:22; Job 27:7; Job 27:8; Job 27:17; Job 28:13; Job 29:12; Job 29:15; Job 29:16; Job 29:17; Job 30:1; Job 30:12; Job 30:23; Job 30:25; Job 30:26; Job 31:3; Job 31:16; Job 31:17; Job 31:19; Job 31:25; Job 32:9; Job 33:30; Job 34:2; Job 34:17; Job 34:19; Job 34:20; Job 34:24; Job 34:28; Job 35:9; Job 35:12; Job 36:4; Job 36:6; Job 36:7; Job 36:13; Job 36:15; Job 36:17; Job 37:14; Job 37:16; Job 37:24; Job 38:13; Job 38:15; Job 39:30; Job 40:11; Job 40:12; Job 40:13; Job 41:3; Job 41:25; Job 41:34; Job 42:14

Oath Formulas

An oath is a solemn promise that someone makes to another person to do something or to solemnly testify that something is true that includes a punishment if the person does not do it.

This page answers the question: *How do I translate oath formulas into my language?*

Description

As a guarantee that the person taking the oath will do what he promises, the person calls on God to punish him severely if he does not do the thing promised, or if what he testifies to is not true. Sometimes the person will name a deity different than God as punisher or will name something that the person holds sacred. In the case of a sacred object, the idea is that the person is willing to let that object be desecrated if he does not fulfill his oath. So an oath has four parts, some of which are often left implied: 1. Calling on God to witness the oath and judge the person making it 2. Making the promise (may be implied as the opposite of the violation) 3. Telling what would be a violation of the oath (may be implied as the opposite of the promise) 4. Saying what punishment God would do if the person violates the oath

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

People in some cultures may not be familiar with the practice of taking oaths, and so they may not understand what the people in the Bible are doing. In many languages, people would not take an oath the way that people did in the Bible, and so they might not recognize that the person is taking an oath. In the Old Testament, people often did not speak one or more parts of the oath, leaving those parts implied. The part that was most often left unspoken was the part that would tell what they are asking God to do if they break the oath. People believed that spoken words have power, and that speaking the part about punishment might cause the punishment to happen, so they often left that part to be understood silently. Because of these things, people might think that the person in the Bible is not making a real oath or they may not understand what the verse is talking about at all.

Examples From the Bible

“I raise my hand to Yahweh, God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth, if from a thread even to the strap of a sandal, or if I take from anything that {belongs} to you, so that you will not say, ‘I made Abram rich.’ (Genesis 14:22-23 ULT)

In the verse above, Abram describes a symbolic action (raising his hand to Yahweh) to signal that he is taking an oath and calling on Yahweh as witness and judge. He says what would violate his oath (thus promising to do the opposite). Then he leaves out the part that would describe how Yahweh would punish him if he fails to do what he is promising.

May Yahweh do thus to me, and thus may he add, if death separates between me and between you. (Ruth 1:17 ULT)

Ruth calls on Yahweh and includes the part about Yahweh punishing her, says what the violation would be (thus promising to do the opposite), but does not say what the punishment would be.

And Saul said, “Thus may God do and thus may he add, for dying you will die, Jonathan.” (1 Samuel 14:44 ULT)

Saul takes an oath that Jonathan will die, but does not specifically say whom God would punish, what the punishment would be, or what the person would do that would violate the oath and bring about God's punishment.

Translation Strategies

If people who speak your language would recognize the oath as it is in the ULT, consider translating it in its current form. If not, consider using the following strategies.

- (1) Add in the missing parts so that people recognize it as an oath.
- (2) If oaths are unfamiliar, add a short explanation of what an oath is.
- (3) Put the oath into a form that would be natural in your language.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Add in the missing parts so that people recognize it as an oath.

“I raise my hand to Yahweh, God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth, if from a thread even to the strap of a sandal, or if I take from anything that {belongs} to you, so that you will not say, ‘I made Abram rich.’ (Genesis 14:22-23 ULT)

“I raise my hand to Yahweh, God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth, **and ask him to punish me severely** if from a thread even to the strap of a sandal, or if I take from anything that {belongs} to you, so that you will not say, ‘I made Abram rich.’

And Saul said, “Thus may God do and thus may he add, for dying you will die, Jonathan.” (1 Samuel 14:44 ULT)

And Saul said, “May God **punish me severely** and may he add **even more punishment if I do not kill you**, for dying you will die, Jonathan.”

- (2) If oaths are unfamiliar, add a short explanation of what an oath is.

May Yahweh do thus to me, and thus may he add, if death separates between me and between you. (Ruth 1:17 ULT)

Then Ruth called on Yahweh to enforce her promise: “May Yahweh do thus to me, and thus may he add, if death separates between me and between you.”

- (3) Put the oath into a form that would be natural in your language.

“I raise my hand to Yahweh, God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth, if from a thread even to the strap of a sandal, or if I take from anything that {belongs} to you, so that you will not say, ‘I made Abram rich.’ (Genesis 14:22-23 ULT)

“I solemnly swear before Yahweh, God Most High, the possessor of heaven and earth, **that I will not take** from a thread even to the strap of a sandal, or from anything that {belongs} to you, **so help me God**, so that you will not say, ‘I made Abram rich.’

May Yahweh do thus to me, and thus may he add, if death separates between me and between you. (Ruth 1:17 ULT)

May Yahweh **strike me dead right where I stand** if death separates between me and between you.

”

Referenced in: [Job 27:2](#); [Job 27:3](#); [Job 27:4](#); [Job 31:25](#); [Job 31:29](#); [Job 31:31](#); [Job 31:34](#)

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: [Job 1:7](#); [Job 2:2](#); [Job 3:3](#); [Job 3:11](#); [Job 10:5](#); [Job 10:6](#); [Job 14:2](#); [Job 19:27](#); [Job 24:23](#); [Job 28:12](#); [Job 28:14](#); [Job 30:23](#); [Job 33:29](#); [Job 35:13](#); [Job 36:8](#); [Job 38:19](#); [Job 40:5](#)

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: Job 2:11; Job 3:3; Job 3:5; Job 3:6; Job 3:7; Job 3:9; Job 3:10; Job 3:25; Job 3:26; Job 4:5; Job 4:13; Job 5:2; Job 5:16; Job 5:19; Job 5:21; Job 5:23; Job 6:3; Job 6:4; Job 6:8; Job 6:16; Job 6:30; Job 7:10; Job 7:13; Job 8:4; Job 8:7; Job 8:15; Job 8:17; Job 8:18; Job 9:5; Job 9:13; Job 9:20; Job 9:25; Job 9:31; Job 10:16; Job 11:14; Job 11:20; Job 12:2; Job 12:6; Job 12:7; Job 12:8; Job 12:9; Job 12:11; Job 13:11; Job 14:9; Job 15:5; Job 15:6; Job 15:12; Job 15:21; Job 15:24; Job 15:33; Job 16:8; Job 17:11; Job 17:16; Job 18:7; Job 18:8; Job 18:11; Job 18:12; Job 18:14; Job 19:20; Job 20:2; Job 20:3; Job 20:9; Job 20:11; Job 20:27; Job 20:28; Job 21:6; Job 22:21; Job 26:11; Job 27:2; Job 27:6; Job 27:9; Job 27:22; Job 28:4; Job 28:14; Job 28:22; Job 29:13; Job 30:2; Job 30:15; Job 30:16; Job 30:17; Job 30:27; Job 31:1; Job 31:5; Job 31:7; Job 31:27; Job 31:29; Job 31:30; Job 31:38; Job 32:7; Job 32:15; Job 33:2; Job 33:3; Job 33:25; Job 33:27; Job 34:3; Job 35:6; Job 35:11; Job 36:16; Job 36:17; Job 36:19; Job 37:6; Job 37:13; Job 37:15; Job 38:7; Job 38:11; Job 38:12; Job 38:13; Job 38:27; Job 38:30; Job 38:32; Job 38:36; Job 39:7; Job 39:9; Job 39:15; Job 39:16; Job 39:17; Job 39:18; Job 39:21; Job 39:22; Job 39:25; Job 40:20; Job 41:3; Job 41:4; Job 41:15; Job 41:17; Job 41:18; Job 41:19; Job 41:22; Job 41:27; Job 41:29

We also find:

- old words and expressions
- dramatic imagery
- different use of grammar — including:
 - incomplete sentences
 - lack of connective words

Some places to look for poetry in your language

Songs, particularly old songs or songs used in children's games

Religious ceremony or chants of priests or witch doctors

Prayers, blessings, and curses

Old legends

Elegant or fancy speech

Elegant or fancy speech is similar to poetry in that it uses beautiful language, but it does not use all of the language's features of poetry, and it does not use them as much as poetry does. Popular speakers in the language often use elegant speech, and this is probably the easiest source of text to study to find out what makes speech elegant in your language.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

- Different languages use poetry for different things. If a poetic form would not communicate the same meaning in your language, you may need to write it without the poetry.
- Different languages use different poetic devices. A poetic device that conveys elegance or emotion in a biblical language may be confusing or misunderstood in another language.
- In some languages, using poetry for a particular part of the Bible would make it much more powerful.

Examples From the Bible

The Bible uses poetry for songs, teaching, and prophecy. Almost all of the books of the Old Testament have poetry in them and many of the books are completely made up of poetry.

... for you saw my affliction; you knew the distress of my soul. (Psalm 31:7b ULT)

This example of [Parallelism](#) has two lines that mean the same thing.

Yahweh, judge the nations; vindicate me, Yahweh, because I am righteous and innocent, Most High. (Psalm 7:8 ULT)

This example of parallelism shows the contrast between what David wants God to do to him and what he wants God to do to the unrighteous nations. (See [Parallelism](#).)

Keep your servant also from arrogant sins; let them not rule over me. (Psalm 19:13a ULT)

This example of personification speaks of sins as if they could rule over a person. (See [Personification](#).)

Oh, give thanks to Yahweh; for he is good,
for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.

Oh, give thanks to the God of gods,

for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
 Oh, give thanks to the Lord of lords,
 for his covenant faithfulness endures forever.
 (Psalm 136:1-3 ULT)

This example repeats the phrases “give thanks” and “his covenant faithfulness endures forever.”

Translation Strategies

If the style of poetry that is used in the source text would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other ways of translating it.

- (1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry.
- (2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.
- (3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

If you use poetry it may be more beautiful.

If you use ordinary speech it may be more clear.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Blessed is the man who does not walk in the advice of the wicked, or stand in the pathway with sinners, or sit in the assembly of mockers. But his delight is in the law of Yahweh, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalm 1:1-2 ULT)

The following are examples of how people might translate Psalm 1:1-2.

- (1) Translate the poetry using one of your styles of poetry. (The style in this example has words that sound similar at the end of each line.)

“Happy is the person not encouraged **to sin**, Disrespect for God he will not **begin**, To those who laugh at God he is **no kin**. God is his constant **delight**, He does what God says **is right**, He thinks of it all day **and night**.”

- (2) Translate the poetry using your style of elegant speech.

This is the kind of person who is truly blessed: the one who does not follow the advice of wicked people nor stop along the road to speak with sinners nor join the gathering of those who mock God. Rather, he takes great joy in Yahweh’s law, and he meditates on it day and night.

- (3) Translate the poetry using your style of ordinary speech.

The people who do not listen to the advice of bad people are really happy. They do not spend time with people who continually do evil things or join with those who do not respect God. Instead, they love to obey Yahweh’s law, and they think about it all the time.

Next we recommend you learn about:
[Symbolic Language \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Politeness

Description

This page answers the question: *How do I translate politeness into my language?*

People say certain things, or say things in a certain way, in order to communicate that they respect the people to whom they are speaking. We can refer to this as speaking politely. The ways of speaking politely are generally agreed on by those who share a culture. People also use polite ways of speaking to avoid offending others. This can be especially important if the person being addressed has an influential or powerful position.

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue:

Every language has ways to communicate politeness to other speakers of that language, but different languages do not communicate politeness in the same ways. A phrase that is polite in one language may be offensive in another language, or it may simply be confusing. Translators need to recognize politeness in the Bible and communicate the same polite meaning using the appropriate form of politeness in the target language.

Examples From the Bible

▮ **do not trouble yourself** (Luke 7:6 ULT)

The centurion sent friends to give Jesus this polite message that Jesus should not come to his house.

▮ **I ask you, have me excused** (Luke 14:18 ULT)

In this culture, this was a polite formula for declining a social invitation.

▮ **May I find favor in your eyes, my lord**, since you have comforted me, and since you have spoken to the heart of **your female servant**. (Ruth 2:13 ULT)

Ruth uses several phrases of politeness as she talks to Boaz. **May I find favor in your eyes** is an idiomatic phrase that communicates that Boaz is in a high position, **my lord** is an honorific form of address, and she refers to herself humbly as **your female servant** even though she is not actually one of his servants.

▮ Please let **a little** water be brought... Let me also bring **a bit** of bread (Genesis 18:4-5 ULT)

Abraham described his generosity as something small in order to be polite. This was a way to communicate to his guests that they were not imposing on him at all.

Honorifics

A specific category of politeness is the way that people address other people who are important, powerful, or worthy of honor in other ways. We can refer to this form of politeness as using honorific language. Honorific language can be in the form of special titles or, in some languages, special forms of the words used.

▮ to the **most excellent** Governor Felix (Acts 23:26 ULT)

The expression **most excellent** was an honorific title by which people addressed Roman government officials.

▮ **O king, live forever!** (Daniel 5:10 ULT)

This was the polite and respectful way to address the king before saying anything else to him.

Politeness under other categories

People often use language that is non-standard or figurative to communicate politeness. In these cases, there will be a Translation Note under the category of the figure of speech rather than under the category of politeness. The Note will discuss the issue of the figurative speech and then also mention that this is being used to be polite. For example, the following verses will have Translation Notes under the categories given rather than under politeness.

Metaphor

Men, **brothers and fathers**, hear my defense to you now. (Acts 22:1 ULT)

Paul is using the word **brothers** to refer to his fellow Israelites. He is using the word **fathers** to refer either to Jewish leaders who may be present or to Jewish men who are older than he is. In both cases he is speaking respectfully.

Idiom

I beg of you, about whom is the prophet saying this...? (Acts 8:34 ULT)

The Ethiopian official is using an idiomatic expression as a polite way to introduce a request.

Symbolic action

And having fallen down, they worshiped him (Matt 2:11 ULT)

The act of kneeling down before someone showed deep respect for the person.

Speaking of oneself in the third person

please do not pass by **your servant**. (Gen 18:3 ULT)

Abraham refers to himself as **your servant** here in order to show respect to his guests.

Euphemism

And having said this, **he fell asleep**. (Acts 7:60 ULT)

Luke is describing the death of Stephen when he says **he fell asleep**. He is using this polite way of referring to something unpleasant to avoid offending his readers.

Other Uses of the Imperative

You pray to the Lord for me, so that nothing of which you have spoken may come upon me. (Acts 8:24 ULT)

The verb **pray** is an imperative, but it communicates a polite request rather than a command.

Rhetorical question

Lord, are you not concerned that my sister has left me alone to serve? (Luke 10:40 ULT)

Martha is complaining that Jesus is allowing Mary to sit listening to him when there is so much work to do. But Martha respects Jesus, so she uses the question form to make her complaint more polite.

Translation Strategies

If the phrase used in the ULT would be natural and be a polite expression in your language, consider using it. If not, use the strategy below.

(1) Use a phrase that would be both natural and polite in your language for this situation.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Use a phrase that would be both natural and polite in your language for this situation.

█ **do not trouble yourself** (Luke 7:6 ULT)

I do not want you to go out of your way
or
Please do not bother

█ **I ask you, have me excused** (Luke 14:18 ULT)

Please accept my apology for not being able to attend

█ **May I find favor in your eyes, my lord**, since you have comforted me, and since you have spoken to the heart of **your female servant**. (Ruth 2:13 ULT)

You are too kind to me, good sir; you have comforted me and you have spoken to my heart even though I am not worthy of it.

█ Please let **a little** water be brought... Let me also bring **a bit** of bread (Genesis 18:4-5 ULT)

I have plenty of water... I also have plenty of food

█ **O king, live forever!** (Daniel 5:10 ULT)

Your majesty, I wish you well

█ **I beg of you**, about whom is the prophet saying this...? (Acts 8:34 ULT)

Please tell me, about whom is the prophet saying this...?

█ **You pray to the Lord for me**, so that nothing of which you have spoken may come upon me. (Acts 8:24 ULT)

Please pray to the Lord for me so that nothing of which you have spoken may come upon me.

or

I ask you to pray to the Lord for me so that nothing of which you have spoken may come upon me.

█ **Lord, are you not concerned that my sister has left me alone to serve?** (Luke 10:40 ULT)

Lord, it seems as if you do not care that my sister has left me alone to serve.

"

Referenced in: [Job 5:1](#)

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 **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: [Job 3:5](#); [Job 3:6](#); [Job 3:10](#); [Job 5:21](#); [Job 6:4](#); [Job 16:2](#); [Job 18:7](#); [Job 18:10](#); [Job 18:13](#); [Job 18:17](#); [Job 19:9](#); [Job 19:15](#); [Job 19:17](#); [Job 19:19](#); [Job 20:3](#); [Job 20:29](#); [Job 21:2](#); [Job 22:12](#); [Job 23:14](#); [Job 26:14](#); [Job 28:3](#); [Job 28:23](#);

Job 29:14; Job 30:21; Job 30:23; Job 31:11; Job 31:16; Job 31:23; Job 31:28; Job 33:7; Job 33:16; Job 33:20; Job 33:30;
Job 36:18; Job 37:15; Job 38:11; Job 38:25; Job 38:33; Job 39:23; Job 41:7; Job 41:9; Job 41:13

Predictive Past

Description

The predictive past is a figure of speech that uses the past tense to refer to things that will happen in the future. This is sometimes done in prophecy to show that the event will certainly happen. It is also called the prophetic perfect.

Therefore my people have gone into captivity for lack of understanding; their honored leaders go hungry, and their common people have nothing to drink. (Isaiah 5:13 ULT)

In the example above, the people of Israel had not yet gone into captivity, but God spoke of their going into captivity as if it had already happened because he had decided that they certainly would go into captivity.

This page answers the question: *What is the predictive past?*

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

[Figures of Speech \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue:

Readers who are not aware of the past tense being used in prophecy to refer to future events may find it confusing.

Examples From the Bible

Now Jericho was tightly closed because of the sons of Israel. No one went out and no one came in. Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:1-2 ULT)

For to us a child has been born, to us a son has been given; and the rule will be on his shoulder. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

In the examples above, God spoke of things that would happen in the future as if they had already happened.

But even Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about them, saying, "Look! The Lord came with thousands and thousands of his holy ones." (Jude 1:14 ULT)

Enoch was speaking of something that would happen in the future, but he used the past tense when he said "the Lord came."

Translation Strategies

If the past tense would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, here are some other options.

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.
- (2) If it refers to something in the immediate future, use a form that would show that.
- (3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use the future tense to refer to future events.

For to us a child **has been born**, to us a son **has been given**. (Isaiah 9:6a ULT)

For to us a child **will be born**, to us a son **will be given**.

(2) If it refers to something that would happen very soon, use a form that shows that.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am about to deliver** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

(3) Some languages may use the present tense to show that something will happen very soon.

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho, and its king, and its powerful soldiers into your hand." (Joshua 6:2 ULT)

Yahweh said to Joshua, "See, I **am delivering** over to you Jericho, its king, and its powerful soldiers."

"

Referenced in: [Job 23:10](#); [Job 33:2](#); [Job 36:16](#)

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: [Job 3:6](#); [Job 3:8](#); [Job 4:5](#); [Job 4:18](#); [Job 4:19](#); [Job 5:3](#); [Job 5:5](#); [Job 5:8](#); [Job 5:10](#); [Job 5:18](#); [Job 5:27](#); [Job 6:3](#); [Job 6:7](#); [Job 6:10](#); [Job 6:16](#); [Job 6:19](#); [Job 6:20](#); [Job 6:24](#); [Job 6:29](#); [Job 7:3](#); [Job 7:11](#); [Job 8:5](#); [Job 8:10](#); [Job 8:18](#); [Job](#)

9:3; Job 9:4; Job 9:5; Job 9:12; Job 9:14; Job 9:15; Job 9:29; Job 9:34; Job 10:16; Job 10:22; Job 11:10; Job 11:13; Job 12:13; Job 12:17; Job 13:2; Job 13:18; Job 14:5; Job 14:12; Job 14:15; Job 14:19; Job 15:4; Job 15:15; Job 15:24; Job 15:26; Job 15:29; Job 15:30; Job 16:7; Job 16:13; Job 17:6; Job 17:12; Job 18:13; Job 18:14; Job 18:15; Job 18:18; Job 19:25; Job 19:26; Job 19:27; Job 20:8; Job 20:23; Job 21:3; Job 21:12; Job 21:17; Job 21:19; Job 21:23; Job 21:25; Job 22:18; Job 22:20; Job 22:21; Job 22:29; Job 22:30; Job 23:3; Job 23:14; Job 24:2; Job 24:5; Job 24:6; Job 24:9; Job 24:10; Job 24:11; Job 24:13; Job 24:16; Job 24:17; Job 24:20; Job 24:21; Job 24:22; Job 24:23; Job 24:24; Job 25:2; Job 26:6; Job 26:7; Job 27:8; Job 27:12; Job 28:1; Job 28:3; Job 28:4; Job 28:6; Job 28:8; Job 28:9; Job 28:10; Job 28:11; Job 28:13; Job 28:24; Job 28:27; Job 29:21; Job 29:24; Job 30:2; Job 30:5; Job 30:11; Job 30:18; Job 30:19; Job 31:11; Job 31:12; Job 31:18; Job 33:18; Job 33:24; Job 33:26; Job 33:31; Job 33:33; Job 34:11; Job 34:20; Job 34:21; Job 34:32; Job 35:4; Job 35:9; Job 36:28; Job 36:30; Job 36:31; Job 36:33; Job 37:1; Job 37:3; Job 37:4; Job 37:12; Job 37:13; Job 37:21; Job 38:11; Job 38:14; Job 38:18; Job 38:20; Job 38:23; Job 38:33; Job 38:40; Job 39:4; Job 39:15; Job 39:21; Job 40:2; Job 40:14

Proverbs

Description

Proverbs are short sayings that give wise advice or teach something that is generally true about life. People enjoy proverbs because they give a lot of wisdom in few words. Proverbs in the Bible often use metaphor and parallelism. Proverbs should not be understood as absolute and unchangeable laws. Rather, proverbs offer general advice to a person about how to live his life.

Hatred stirs up conflicts, but love covers over all offenses. (Proverbs 10:12 ULT)

Here is another example from the book of Proverbs.

Look at the ant, you lazy person, consider her ways, and be wise. It has no commander, officer, or ruler, yet it prepares its food in the summer, and during the harvest it stores up what it will eat. (Proverbs 6:6-8 ULT)

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

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

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

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

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

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Each language has its own ways of saying proverbs. There are many proverbs in the Bible. They need to be translated in the way that people say proverbs in your language so that people recognize them as proverbs and understand what they teach.

Examples From the Bible

A good name is to be chosen over great riches, and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

This means that it is better to be a good person and to have a good reputation than it is to have a lot of money.

Like vinegar on the teeth and smoke in the eyes, so is the sluggard to those who send him. (Proverbs 10:26 ULT)

This means that a lazy person is very annoying to those who send him to do something.

The way of Yahweh protects those who have integrity, but it is destruction for the wicked. (Proverbs 10:29 ULT)

This means that Yahweh protects people who do what is right, but he destroys those who are wicked.

Translation Strategies

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

- (1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.
- (2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.
- (3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.
- (4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) Find out how people say proverbs in your language, and use one of those ways.

A good name is to be chosen over great riches,
and favor is better than silver and gold. (Proverbs 22:1 ULT)

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

It is better to have a good name than to have great riches,
and to be favored by people than to have silver and gold.

Wise people choose a good name over great riches,
and favor over silver and gold.

Try to have a good reputation rather than great riches.

Will riches really help you?
I would rather have a good reputation.

(2) If certain objects in the proverb are not known to many people in your language group, consider replacing them with objects that people know and that function in the same way in your language.

Like **snow in summer** or rain in harvest,
so a fool does not deserve honor. (Proverbs 26:1 ULT)

It is not natural for **a cold wind to blow in the hot season** or for it to rain
in the harvest season;
And it is not natural to honor a foolish person.

(3) Substitute a proverb in your language that has the same teaching as the proverb in the Bible.

Do not boast about tomorrow,
for you do not know what a day may bring. (Proverbs 27:1a ULT)

Do not count your chickens before they hatch.

(4) Give the same teaching but not in a form of a proverb.

There is a generation that curses their father
and does not bless their mother.
There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes,
and yet they are not washed of their filth. (Proverbs 30:11-12 ULT)

People who do not respect their parents think that they are righteous,
and they do not turn away from their sin.

"

Referenced in: [Job 6:5](#); [Job 6:6](#); [Job 17:12](#)

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: [Job 33:9](#)

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: [Job 8:11](#); [Job 8:22](#); [Job 10:2](#); [Job 10:22](#)

Quotes within Quotes

Description

A quotation may have a quote within it, and quotes that are inside of other quotes can also have quotes within them. When a quote has quotes within it, we say there are “layers” of quotation, and each of the quotes is a layer. When there are many layers of quotes inside of quotes, it can be hard for listeners and readers to know who is saying what. Some languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes to make it easier.

This page answers the question: *What is a quote within a quote, and how can I help the readers understand who is saying what?*

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

Direct and Indirect Quotations (UTA PDF)

Reasons This Is a Translation Issue

When there is a quote within a quote, the listener needs to know who the pronouns refer to. For example: if a quote that is inside a quote has the word “I,” the listener needs to know whether “I” refers to the speaker of the inner quote or the outer quote.

Some languages make this clear by using different kinds of quotes when there are quotes within quotes. They may use direct quotes for some and indirect quotes for others. Some languages do not use indirect quotes.

Examples From the Bible

A quotation with only one layer

But Paul said, “I, however, was indeed born a citizen.” (Acts 22:28b ULT)

Quotations with two layers

Jesus answered and said to them, “Be careful that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name. They will say, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will lead many astray.” (Matthew 24:4-5 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to his disciples. The second layer is what other people will say.

Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king.” (John 18:37b ULT)

The outermost layer is what Jesus said to Pilate. The second layer is what Pilate said about Jesus.

A quotation with three layers

Abraham said, “... I said to her, ‘You must show me this faithfulness as my wife: At every place where we go, say about me, **“He is my brother.”**” (Genesis 20:11a, 13 ULT)

The outermost layer is what Abraham responded to Abimelech. The second layer is what Abraham had told his wife. The third layer is what he wanted his wife to say. (We have bolded the third layer.)

A quotation with four layers

They said to him, “A man came to meet us who said to us, ‘Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, “Yahweh says this: **‘Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal- Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.’**” (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

The outermost layer is what the messengers said to the king. The second layer is what the man who had met the messengers told them. The third is what that man wanted the messengers to say to the king. The fourth is what Yahweh said. (We have bolded the fourth layer.)

Translation Strategies

Some languages use only direct quotes. Other languages use a combination of direct quotes and indirect quotes. In those languages it might sound strange and perhaps even be confusing if there are many layers of direct quotes.

- (1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes.
- (2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. (See [Direct and Indirect Quotations](#).)

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Translate all of the quotes as direct quotes. In the example below we have bolded the indirect quotes in the ULT and the quotes that we have changed to direct quotes below it.

Festus presented to the king the things concerning Paul, saying, "There is a certain man was left here as a prisoner by Felix. So I am uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked **if he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there to be judged concerning these things**. But when Paul appealed **to keep him in custody for the decision of the emperor**, I ordered him **to be held in custody until when I could send him to Caesar.**" (Acts 25:14b, 20-21 ULT)

Festus presented Paul's case to the king. He said, "A certain man was left behind here by Felix as a prisoner. I was uncertain about the things concerning this matter. I asked him, **'Will you go to Jerusalem to be judged there concerning these things?'** But when Paul said, **'I want to be kept in custody for the emperor's decision,'** I told the guard, **'Keep him in custody until when I can send him to Caesar.'**"

- (2) Translate one or some of the quotes as indirect quotes. In English the word "that" can come before indirect quotes. It is bolded in the examples below. The pronouns that changed because of the indirect quote are also bolded.

And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Speak to them and say, 'During the evenings you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be satisfied with bread. And you will know that I am Yahweh your God.'" (Exodus 16:11-12 ULT)

And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, "I have heard the complaints of the sons of Israel. Tell them **that** during the evenings **they** will eat meat, and in the morning **they** will be satisfied with bread. And **they** will know that I am Yahweh **their** God."

They said to him, "A man came to meet us who said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, 'Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.''" (2 Kings 1:6 ULT)

They told him **that** a man had come to meet **them** who said to **them**, "Go back to the king who sent you, and tell him **that** Yahweh says this: 'Is it because there is no God in Israel that you sent men to consult with Baal Zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you will not come down from the bed to which you have gone up; instead, you will certainly die.'"

[Quote Markings \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Next we recommend you learn about:

[Quote Markings \(UTA PDF\)](#)

Referenced in: [Job 3:3](#); [Job 4:17](#); [Job 6:22](#); [Job 6:23](#); [Job 9:12](#); [Job 10:2](#); [Job 11:4](#); [Job 15:23](#); [Job 17:14](#); [Job 19:7](#); [Job 19:28](#); [Job 20:7](#); [Job 21:14](#); [Job 21:15](#); [Job 21:19](#); [Job 21:28](#); [Job 22:13](#); [Job 22:14](#); [Job 22:17](#); [Job 22:20](#); [Job 22:29](#); [Job 24:15](#); [Job 28:14](#); [Job 28:22](#); [Job 28:28](#); [Job 29:18](#); [Job 29:19](#); [Job 29:20](#); [Job 31:24](#); [Job 31:31](#); [Job 32:7](#); [Job 32:10](#); [Job 32:13](#); [Job 33:9](#); [Job 33:10](#); [Job 33:11](#); [Job 33:24](#); [Job 33:27](#); [Job 33:28](#); [Job 34:5](#); [Job 34:6](#); [Job 34:9](#); [Job 34:18](#); [Job 34:31](#); [Job 34:32](#); [Job 34:35](#); [Job 35:2](#); [Job 35:3](#); [Job 35:10](#); [Job 35:11](#); [Job 35:15](#); [Job 36:23](#); [Job 37:6](#); [Job 38:11](#); [Job 38:35](#); [Job 42:3](#); [Job 42:4](#)

Reduplication

This is a placeholder for an article to be written about reduplication in the biblical text, such as infinitive-absolute + indicative or other repeated words.

This page answers the question: *What is reduplication?*

Description

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Examples From the Bible

Begin, possess, to possess his land (Deut 2:31 ULT)

Translation Strategies

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

"

Referenced in: [Job 6:2](#); [Job 13:5](#); [Job 13:10](#); [Job 13:17](#); [Job 19:21](#); [Job 21:2](#); [Job 27:22](#); [Job 29:14](#); [Job 37:2](#)

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: Job 1:9; Job 1:10; Job 2:9; Job 2:10; Job 3 General Notes; Job 3:11; Job 3:12; Job 3:20; Job 3:21; Job 3:22; Job 3:23; Job 4 General Notes; Job 4:2; Job 4:6; Job 4:7; Job 4:17; Job 4:21; Job 5:1; Job 6 General Notes; Job 6:5; Job 6:6; Job 6:8; Job 6:11; Job 6:12; Job 6:13; Job 6:22; Job 6:23; Job 6:25; Job 6:26; Job 6:30; Job 7 General Notes; Job 7:1; Job 7:4; Job 7:12; Job 7:17; Job 7:18; Job 7:19; Job 7:20; Job 7:21; Job 8:2; Job 8:3; Job 8:10; Job 8:11; Job 9:2; Job 9:4; Job 9:12; Job 9:19; Job 9:29; Job 10 General Notes; Job 10:3; Job 10:4; Job 10:5; Job 10:6; Job 10:7; Job 10:9; Job 10:10; Job 10:18; Job 10:20; Job 11 General Notes; Job 11:2; Job 11:3; Job 11:7; Job 11:8; Job 11:10; Job 11:11; Job 12:3; Job 12:9; Job 12:11; Job 13:7; Job 13:8; Job 13:9; Job 13:11; Job 13:14; Job 13:19; Job 13:25; Job 14:3; Job 14:4; Job 14:10; Job 14:14; Job 15:2; Job 15:3; Job 15:7; Job 15:8; Job 15:9; Job 15:11; Job 15:12; Job 15:14; Job 16:3; Job 16:6; Job 17:2; Job 17:3; Job 17:15; Job 17:16; Job 18:2; Job 18:3; Job 18:4; Job 19:2; Job 19:22; Job 20:4; Job 20:5; Job 20:7; Job 21:4; Job 21:7; Job 21:15; Job 21:17; Job 21:18; Job 21:21; Job 21:22; Job 21:28; Job 21:29; Job 21:30; Job 21:31; Job 21:34; Job 22:2; Job 22:3; Job 22:4; Job 22:5; Job 22:12; Job 22:13; Job 22:15; Job 22:17; Job 22:20; Job 23:13; Job 24:1; Job 24:25; Job 25:3; Job 25:4; Job 26:4; Job 26:14; Job 27:8; Job 27:9; Job 27:10; Job 27:12; Job 28:12; Job 28:20; Job 30:2; Job 30:24; Job 30:25; Job 31:1; Job 31:2; Job 31:3; Job 31:4; Job 31:14; Job 31:15; Job 31:31; Job 31:36; Job 32:16; Job 33:13; Job 34:6; Job 34:7; Job 34:13; Job 34:17; Job 34:19; Job 34:29; Job 35:2; Job 35:3; Job 35:6; Job 35:7; Job 36:19; Job 36:22; Job 36:23; Job 36:29; Job 37:15; Job 37:16; Job 37:20; Job 38:2; Job 38:4; Job 38:5; Job 39:1; Job 40:4; Job 40:8; Job 40:9; Job 40:24; Job 41:1; Job 41:3; Job 41:4; Job 41:5; Job 41:6; Job 41:7; Job 41:9; Job 41:10; Job 41:11; Job 41:13; Job 41:14

Sentence Structure

Description

The simplest sentence structure in English includes a **subject** and an **action** word (a verb):

- The boy ran.

Subject

The **subject** is who or what the sentence is about. In these examples, the subject is bolded:

- **John** ran.
- **The boy** ran.
- **He** ran.

Subjects are typically noun phrases or pronouns. (See [Parts of Speech](#).) In the examples above, “the boy” is a noun phrase that contains the noun “boy,” and “he” is a pronoun.

When the sentence is a command, in many languages it does not have a subject pronoun. People understand that the subject is “you.”

- Close the door.

Predicate

In English, we refer to the part of the sentence that is not the subject as the predicate. This is the part of the sentence that tells something about the subject. In English, it contains a verb and usually also an object. (See [Verbs](#).) (In some languages, the predicate refers only to the object and does not contain a verb.) In the sentences below, the subjects are “the man” and “he.” The predicates are in bold.

- The man **is strong**.
- He **worked hard**.
- He **made a garden**.

Compound Sentences

A sentence can be made up of more than one sentence. Each of the two lines below has a subject and a predicate (containing a verb and an object) and is a full sentence.

- He planted the yams.
- His wife planted the maize.

The compound sentence below contains the two sentences above. In English, compound sentences are joined with a conjunction such as “and,” “but,” or “or.”

- He planted the yams **and** his wife planted the maize.

Clauses

Sentences can also have clauses and other phrases. Clauses are like sentences because they have a subject and a predicate, but usually they cannot occur by themselves. Here are some examples of clauses. They cannot occur by

This page answers the question: *What are the parts of a sentence?*

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

Parts of Speech (UTA PDF)

themselves because they each start with a word that makes them **dependent** on another sentence. The words that turn the following sentences into **dependent clauses** are in bold.

- **when** the maize was ready
- **after** she picked it
- **because** it tasted so good

Sentences can have many clauses, and so they can become long and complex. But each sentence has to have at least one **independent clause**, that is, a clause that can be a sentence all by itself. The other clauses that cannot be sentences by themselves are called the **dependent clauses**. Dependent clauses depend on the independent clause to complete their meaning. The dependent clauses are bolded in the sentences below.

- **When the maize was ready**, she picked it.
- **After she picked it**, she carried it home and cooked it.
- Then she and her husband ate it all, **because it tasted so good**.

The following phrases can each be a whole sentence. They are the independent clauses from the sentences above.

- She picked it.
- She carried it home and cooked it.
- Then she and her husband ate it all.

Relative Clauses

In some languages, clauses can be used to say something about a noun that is part of a sentence. These are called **relative clauses** because they relate only to the noun that is only a part of the sentence.

In the sentence below, “the maize that was ready” is the object of the sentence. The relative clause “that was ready” relates to the noun “maize” to tell more about it, that is, which maize she picked.

- His wife picked the maize **that was ready**.

In the sentence below, the relative clause “who picked the maize” is part of the subject, and tells more about “the woman.” The relative clause “who was very annoyed” is part of the (indirect) object, and relates to the noun “mother” to tell how her mother felt when she did not get any maize.

- The woman **who picked the maize** did not give any of the maize to her mother, **who was very annoyed**.

Translation Issues

- Languages have different orders for the parts of a sentence. (See [Information Structure](#).)
- Some languages do not have relative clauses, or they use them in a limited way. (See [Distinguishing versus Informing or Reminding](#).)

Next we recommend you learn about:

Word Order ([UTA PDF](#))

Distinguishing Versus Informing or Reminding ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Job 19:3](#)

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: Job 3:24; Job 5:25; Job 5:26; Job 6:7; Job 6:15; Job 6:26; Job 7:1; Job 7:2; Job 7:6; Job 10:9; Job 10:10; Job 10:16; Job 11:16; Job 12:25; Job 14:6; Job 15:33; Job 17:7; Job 18:3; Job 19:10; Job 19:22; Job 20:7; Job 20:8; Job 21:11; Job 21:18; Job 23:10; Job 24:5; Job 24:14; Job 24:20; Job 27:16; Job 27:18; Job 29:14; Job 29:18; Job 29:23; Job 29:25; Job 30:5; Job 30:15; Job 30:19; Job 31:37; Job 34:3; Job 38:3; Job 38:14; Job 38:30; Job 39:20; Job 40:7; Job 40:17; Job 40:18; Job 41:27; Job 41:30; Job 41:31

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: [Job 7:12](#); [Job 7:16](#); [Job 7:17](#); [Job 7:18](#); [Job 9:3](#); [Job 13:3](#); [Job 32:16](#); [Job 36:10](#)

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: [Job 1:20](#); [Job 2:8](#); [Job 2:12](#); [Job 2:13](#); [Job 6:28](#); [Job 9:30](#); [Job 9:31](#); [Job 9:33](#); [Job 10:15](#); [Job 11:13](#); [Job 11:15](#); [Job 12:17](#); [Job 12:18](#); [Job 12:19](#); [Job 16:4](#); [Job 16:9](#); [Job 16:10](#); [Job 17:3](#); [Job 17:6](#); [Job 19:25](#); [Job 21:5](#); [Job 22:26](#); [Job 22:29](#); [Job 27:23](#); [Job 29:7](#); [Job 29:8](#); [Job 29:9](#); [Job 30:10](#); [Job 30:20](#); [Job 30:24](#); [Job 31:21](#); [Job 34:37](#); [Job 40:4](#); [Job 40:13](#); [Job 42:6](#); [Job 42:11](#)

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: [Job 1:10](#); [Job 1:15](#); [Job 1:19](#); [Job 1:21](#); [Job 2:4](#); [Job 2:5](#); [Job 3:12](#); [Job 3:16](#); [Job 4:3](#); [Job 4:12](#); [Job 4:14](#); [Job 5:18](#); [Job 5:20](#); [Job 6:7](#); [Job 6:28](#); [Job 7:5](#); [Job 7:7](#); [Job 7:8](#); [Job 7:11](#); [Job 7:15](#); [Job 8:6](#); [Job 8:21](#); [Job 8:22](#); [Job 9:16](#); [Job 9:21](#); [Job 9:26](#); [Job 10:1](#); [Job 10:3](#); [Job 10:7](#); [Job 10:8](#); [Job 10:12](#); [Job 10:18](#); [Job 11:5](#); [Job 12:10](#); [Job 13:1](#); [Job 13:6](#); [Job 13:14](#); [Job 14:15](#); [Job 14:16](#); [Job 14:20](#); [Job 14:22](#); [Job 15:7](#); [Job 15:13](#); [Job 15:23](#); [Job 15:27](#); [Job 15:34](#); [Job 16:4](#); [Job 16:8](#); [Job 16:17](#); [Job 16:20](#); [Job 17:1](#); [Job 17:2](#); [Job 17:5](#); [Job 17:13](#); [Job 18:7](#); [Job 19:2](#); [Job 19:17](#); [Job 19:27](#); [Job 19:29](#); [Job 20:4](#); [Job 20:9](#); [Job 20:10](#); [Job 20:11](#); [Job 20:17](#); [Job 21:6](#); [Job 21:20](#); [Job 21:24](#); [Job 21:28](#); [Job 22:7](#); [Job 22:24](#); [Job 23:12](#); [Job 23:13](#); [Job 24:5](#); [Job 24:12](#); [Job 24:15](#); [Job 24:23](#); [Job 26:2](#); [Job 26:13](#); [Job 27:4](#); [Job 27:14](#); [Job 27:15](#); [Job 27:16](#); [Job 28:2](#); [Job 28:5](#); [Job 28:7](#); [Job 28:10](#); [Job 28:21](#); [Job 29:3](#); [Job 29:11](#); [Job 29:13](#); [Job 29:24](#); [Job 30:2](#); [Job 30:4](#); [Job 30:6](#); [Job 30:8](#); [Job 30:12](#); [Job 30:17](#); [Job 30:25](#); [Job 30:30](#); [Job 31:1](#); [Job 31:5](#); [Job 31:7](#); [Job 31:9](#); [Job 31:16](#); [Job 31:20](#); [Job 31:25](#); [Job 31:32](#); [Job 31:34](#); [Job 32:18](#); [Job 32:20](#); [Job 32:21](#); [Job 33:2](#); [Job 33:18](#); [Job 33:20](#); [Job 33:22](#); [Job 33:25](#); [Job 33:28](#); [Job 33:30](#); [Job 34:19](#); [Job 34:20](#); [Job 34:21](#); [Job 34:29](#); [Job 35:7](#); [Job 35:16](#); [Job 36:7](#); [Job 36:10](#); [Job 36:14](#); [Job 36:15](#); [Job 37:7](#); [Job 37:17](#); [Job 39:7](#); [Job 39:13](#); [Job 39:15](#); [Job 39:29](#); [Job 39:30](#); [Job 40:15](#); [Job 40:23](#); [Job 41:1](#); [Job 41:33](#); [Job 42:5](#); [Job 42:11](#)

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: Job 2:7; Job 2:8; Job 6:2; Job 7:6; Job 7:15; Job 8:11; Job 9:30; Job 15:26; Job 17:14; Job 18:8; Job 18:9; Job 18:10; Job 19:24; Job 19:25; Job 20:14; Job 20:16; Job 21:32; Job 27:18; Job 28:2; Job 28:6; Job 28:7; Job 28:16; Job 28:17; Job 28:18; Job 28:19; Job 29:23; Job 30:4; Job 30:29; Job 37:18; Job 38:5; Job 38:9; Job 38:32; Job 38:41; Job 39:9; Job 39:10; Job 39:13; Job 39:23; Job 39:26; Job 40:21; Job 40:22; Job 41:13; Job 41:24

Unusual Uses of the Plural

The biblical languages sometimes use plural forms to refer to single objects, ideas, or people.

This page answers the question: *What are some unusual uses of the plural and how can I translate them?*

Description

Using a plural form to refer to something singular is done to show an intensified feeling about the object, idea, or person, or to show that an object or idea is extraordinary in some way. Also, sometimes a person refers to himself or herself with a plural pronoun. If the person is a king or a leader in a high position, this is to show that the person is very important and represents many people. If the person is writing a letter, such as Paul in the New Testament, this is to do the opposite. It is to avoid referring directly to himself, to avoid any sense that he is boasting or drawing attention to himself.

Reason This Is a Translation Issue

Many languages do not use plural forms to refer to single objects, ideas, or people. In these languages, doing so would be both wrong and confusing. Instead, they need to use a singular form and express any intended intensification in another way.

Examples From the Bible

▮ The tents of robbers prosper, and securities {are} to the provokers of God (Job 12:6 ULT)

Job is using the plural form **securities** to indicate that these provokers of God experience security to a supreme extent.

▮ Now you had cast me deep into the heart of the seas (Jonah 2:3 ULT)

Jonah refers to the sea using the plural **seas** to intensify the idea of either the sea's vastness or activity.

▮ The letter that you sent to **us** has been carefully read aloud before me. (Ezra 4:18 ULT)

Artaxerxes, the king of Persia, refers to himself as **us** in response to a letter sent to him.

▮ ...through whom [Jesus] **we** received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the Gentiles (Romans 1:5 ULT)

Since this letter is from Paul alone, it is likely that he is using the plural **we** to refer to himself.

Translation Strategies

If a plural form would be natural and give the right meaning in your language, consider using it. If not, consider these strategies.

- (1) Use a singular form instead of the plural.
- (2) If the plural is used to intensify the meaning, use a singular form with another word that intensifies it such as "very" or "great" or "many."
- (3) If the plural is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language's ways of doing that.

Translation Strategies Applied

- (1) Use a singular form instead of the plural.

█ The letter that you sent to **us** has been carefully read aloud before me. (Ezra 4:18 ULT)

The letter that you sent to **me** has been carefully read aloud before me.

█ ...through whom [Jesus] **we** received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the Gentiles (Romans 1:5 ULT)

...through whom [Jesus] **I** received grace and apostleship for obedience of faith among all the Gentiles

(2) If the plural is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use a singular form with another word that intensifies it such as “very” or “great” or “many.”

█ The tents of robbers prosper, and **securities {are}** to the provokers of God (Job 12:6 ULT)

The tents of robbers prosper, and **great security {is}** to the provokers of God

█ Now you had cast me deep into the heart of the **seas** (Jonah 2:3 ULT)

Now you had cast me deep into the heart of the **great sea**

(3) If the plural is used to intensify or emphasize the meaning, use one of your language’s ways of doing that.

█ The tents of robbers prosper, and **securities {are}** to the provokers of God (Job 12:6 ULT)

The tents of robbers prosper, and the provokers of God **enjoy complete security**

█ Now you had cast me deep into the heart of the **seas** (Jonah 2:3 ULT)

Now you had cast me deep into the heart of the **raging sea**

"

Referenced in: [Job 12:6](#); [Job 15:26](#); [Job 16:19](#); [Job 16:20](#); [Job 17:1](#); [Job 17:16](#); [Job 18:2](#); [Job 18:3](#); [Job 20:25](#); [Job 22:25](#); [Job 25:2](#); [Job 31:2](#); [Job 33:15](#); [Job 35:9](#); [Job 37:6](#); [Job 37:8](#); [Job 37:16](#); [Job 38:18](#); [Job 41:12](#)

Verse Bridges

Description

In some cases, you will see in the unfoldingWord® Simplified Text (UST) that two or more verse numbers are combined, such as 17-18. This is called a verse bridge. This means that the information in the verses was rearranged so that the story or message could be more easily understood.

This page answers the question: *Why are some verse numbers combined in the UST, such as "3-5" or "17-18"?*

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

Structure of the Bible (UTA PDF)

29 These were the clans of the Horites: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, and Anah, 30 Dishon, Ezer, Dishan: these are clans of the Horites, according to their clan lists in the land of Seir. (Genesis 36:29-30 ULT)

29-30 The people groups who were descendants of Hor lived in Seir land. The names of the people groups are Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. (Genesis 36:29-30 UST)

In the ULT text, verses 29 and 30 are separate, and the information about the people living in Seir is at the end of verse 30. In the UST text, the verses are joined, and the information about them living in Seir is at the beginning. For many languages, this is a more logical order of information.

Examples From the Bible

Where the UST has a verse bridge, the ULT will have separate verses.

⁴⁻⁵ Yahweh our God will bless you in the land that he is giving to you. If you obey Yahweh our God and obey all the commandments that I am giving to you today, there will not be any poor people among you. (Deuteronomy 15:4-5 UST)

⁴ However, there should be no poor among you (for Yahweh will surely bless you in the land that he gives you as an inheritance to possess), ⁵ if only you diligently listen to the voice of Yahweh your God, to keep all these commandments that I am commanding you today. (Deuteronomy 15:4-5 ULT)

¹⁶⁻¹⁷ But Yahweh said to him, "I will not permit you to eat the fruit of the tree that will enable you to know what actions are good to do and what actions are evil to do. If you eat any fruit from that tree, on the day you eat it you will surely die. But I will permit you to eat the fruit of any of the other trees in the park." (Genesis 2:16-17 UST)

¹⁶ Yahweh God commanded the man, saying, "From every tree in the garden you may freely eat. ¹⁷ But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you may not eat, for on the day that you eat from it, you will surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17 ULT)

Translation Strategies

Order the information in a way that will be clear to your readers. If the order of information is clear as it is in the ULT, then use that order. But if the order is confusing or gives the wrong meaning, then change the order so that it is more clear.

(1) If you put information from one verse before information from an earlier verse, then combine the verses and put a hyphen between the two verse numbers.

See how to mark verses in [translationStudio](#).

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

(1) If information from one verse is put before information from an earlier verse, then combine the verses and put the verse numbers before the first verse with a hyphen between them.

2 You must select three cities for yourself in the middle of your land that Yahweh your God is giving you to possess. 3 You must build a road and divide the borders of your land into three parts, the land that Yahweh your God is causing you to inherit, so that everyone who kills another person may flee there. (Deuteronomy 19:2-3 ULT)

2-3 You must divide into three parts the land that he is giving to you. Then select a city in each part. You must make good roads in order that people can get to those cities easily. Someone who kills another person can escape to one of those cities to be safe. (Deuteronomy 19:2-3 UST)

Next we recommend you learn about:

Chapter and Verse Numbers ([UTA PDF](#))

Referenced in: [Job 6:16](#); [Job 12:7](#); [Job 14:11](#); [Job 14:18](#); [Job 23:8](#); [Job 31:6](#)

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.

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 \(UTA PDF\)](#)

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)

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: Job 1:5; Job 4:13; Job 4:17; Job 5:7; Job 5:17; Job 7:1; Job 9:2; Job 10:4; Job 10:5; Job 12:10; Job 12:14; Job 13:9; Job 14:1; Job 14:10; Job 14:21; Job 15:7; Job 15:14; Job 15:18; Job 16:21; Job 17:5; Job 20:4; Job 20:29; Job 21:4; Job 21:19; Job 22:2; Job 24:12; Job 25:4; Job 25:6; Job 27:13; Job 28:4; Job 28:13; Job 28:28; Job 31:15; Job 31:31; Job 31:33; Job 32:8; Job 32:13; Job 32:21; Job 33 General Notes; Job 33:12; Job 34 General Notes; Job 35:8; Job 36:24; Job 36:25; Job 36:28; Job 37:7; Job 37:20; Job 37:24; Job 38:26; Job 38:32; Job 39:4; Job 39:16

When to Keep Information Implicit

Description

Sometimes it is better not to state assumed knowledge or implicit information explicitly. This page gives some direction about when not to do this.

Translation Principles

- If a speaker or author intentionally left something unclear, do not try to make it more clear.
- If the original audience did not understand what the speaker meant, do not make it so clear that your readers would find it strange that the original audience did not understand.
- If you need to explicitly state some assumed knowledge or implicit information, try to do it in a way that does not make your readers think that the original audience needed to be told those things.
- Do not make implicit information explicit if it confuses the message or leads the reader to forget what the main point is.
- Do not make assumed knowledge or implicit information explicit if your readers already understand it.

This page answers the question: *When should I not make implicit information explicit?*

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

Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information ([UTA PDF](#))
Making Assumed Knowledge and Implicit Information Explicit ([UTA PDF](#))

Examples From the Bible

From the eater came forth food; and from the strong one came forth sweetness. (Judges 14:14 ULT)

This was a riddle. Samson purposely said this in a way that it would be hard for his enemies to know what it meant. Do not make it clear that the eater and the strong thing was a lion and that the sweet thing to eat was honey.

Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." They reasoned among themselves saying, "It is because we did not take bread." (Matthew 16:6-7 ULT)

Some possible implicit information here is that the disciples should beware of the false teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But Jesus' disciples did not understand this. They thought that Jesus was talking about real yeast and bread. So it would not be appropriate to state explicitly that the word "yeast" here refers to false teaching. The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant until they heard what Jesus said in Matthew 16:11.

"How is it that you do not understand that I was not speaking to you about bread? Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Then they understood that he was not telling them to beware of yeast in bread, but to beware of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees. (Matthew 16:11-12 ULT)

Only after Jesus explained that he was not talking about bread did they realize that he was talking about the false teaching of the Pharisees. Therefore, it would be wrong to explicitly state the implicit information in Matthew 16:6.

Translation Strategies

Because we recommend that translators not change this kind of passage to make it more clear, this page does not have any translation strategies.

Examples of Translation Strategies Applied

Because we recommend that translators not change this kind of passage to make it more clear, this page does not have any translation strategies applied.

"

Referenced in: [Job 1:3](#); [Job 3 General Notes](#); [Job 19:25](#)



unfoldingWord® Translation Words

Version 80

faith

Definition:

In general, the term "faith" refers to a belief, trust or confidence in someone or something.

- To "have faith" in someone is to believe that what he says and does is true and trustworthy.
- To "have faith in Jesus" means to believe all of God's teachings about Jesus. It especially means that people trust in Jesus and his sacrifice to cleanse them from their sin and to rescue them from the punishment they deserve because of their sin.
- True faith or belief in Jesus will cause a person to produce good spiritual fruits or behaviors because the Holy Spirit is living in him.
- Sometimes "faith" refers generally to all the teachings about Jesus, as in the expression "the truths of the faith."
- In contexts such as "keep the faith" or "abandon the faith," the term "faith" refers to the state or condition of believing all the teachings about Jesus.

Translation Suggestions:

- In some contexts, "faith" can be translated as "belief" or "conviction" or "confidence" or "trust."
- For some languages these terms will be translated using forms of the verb "believe." (See: [abstractnouns](#))
- The expression "keep the faith" could be translated by "keep believing in Jesus" or "continue to believe in Jesus."
- The sentence "they must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith" could be translated by "they must keep believing all the true things about Jesus that they have been taught."
- The expression "my true son in the faith" could be translated by something like "who is like a son to me because I taught him to believe in Jesus" or "my true spiritual son, who believes in Jesus."

(See also: [believe](#), [faithful](#))

Bible References:

- 2 Timothy 4:7
- Acts 6:7
- Galatians 2:20-21
- James 2:20

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **5:6** When Isaac was a young man, God tested Abraham's **faith** by saying, "Take Isaac, your only son, and kill him as a sacrifice to me."
- **31:7** Then he (Jesus) said to Peter, "You man of little **faith**, why did you doubt?"
- **32:16** Jesus said to her, "Your **faith** has healed you. Go in peace."
- **38:9** Then Jesus said to Peter, "Satan wants to have all of you, but I have prayed for you, Peter, that your **faith** will not fail."

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0529, H0530, G16800, G36400, G41020, G60660

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Referenced in: [Job 19 General Notes](#)

grace, gracious

Definition:

The word “grace” refers to help or blessing that is given to someone who has not earned it. The term “gracious” describes someone who shows grace to others.

- God’s grace toward sinful human beings is a gift that is freely given.
- The concept of grace also refers to being kind and forgiving to someone who has done wrong or hurtful things.
- The expression to “find grace” is an expression that means to receive help and mercy from God. Often it includes the meaning that God is pleased with someone and helps him.

Translation Suggestions:

- Other ways that “grace” could be translated include “divine kindness” or “God’s favor” or “God’s kindness and forgiveness for sinners” or “merciful kindness.”
- The term “gracious” could be translated as “full of grace” or “kind” or “merciful” or “mercifully kind.”
- The expression “he found grace in the eyes of God” could be translated as “he received mercy from God” or “God mercifully helped him” or “God showed his favor to him” or “God was pleased with him and helped him.”

Bible References:

- Acts 4:33
- Acts 6:8
- Acts 14:4
- Colossians 4:6
- Colossians 4:18
- Genesis 43:28-29
- James 4:7
- John 1:16
- Philippians 4:21-23
- Revelation 22:20-21

Word Data:

- Strong’s: H2580, H2587, H2589, H2603, H8467, G21430, G54850, G55430

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Referenced in: [Job 42 General Notes](#)

righteous, righteousness, unrighteous, unrighteousness, upright, uprightness

Definition:

The term “righteousness” refers to God’s absolute goodness, justice, faithfulness, and love. Having these qualities makes God “righteous.” Because God is righteous, he must condemn sin.

- These terms are also often used to describe a person who obeys God and is morally good. However, because all people have sinned, no one except God is completely righteous.
- Examples of people the Bible who were called “righteous” include Noah, Job, Abraham, Zachariah, and Elisabeth.
- When people trust in Jesus to save them, God cleanses them from their sins and declares them to be righteous because of Jesus’ righteousness.

The term “unrighteous” means to be sinful and morally corrupt. “Unrighteousness” refers to sin or the condition of being sinful.

- These terms especially refer to living in a way that disobeys God’s teachings and commands.
- Unrighteous people are immoral in their thoughts and actions.
- Sometimes “the unrighteous” refers specifically to people who do not believe in Jesus.

The terms “upright” and “uprightness” refer to acting in a way that follows God’s laws.

- The meaning of these words includes the idea of standing up straight and looking directly ahead.
- A person who is “upright” is someone who obeys God’s rules and does not do things that are against his will.
- Terms such as “integrity” and “righteous” have similar meanings and are sometimes used in parallelism constructions, such as “integrity and uprightness.” (See: [parallelism](#))

Translation Suggestions:

- When it describes God, the term “righteous” could be translated as “perfectly good and just” or “always acting rightly.”
- God’s “righteousness” could also be translated as “perfect faithfulness and goodness.”
- When it describes people who are obedient to God, the term “righteous” could also be translated as “morally good” or “just” or “living a God-pleasing life.”
- The phrase “the righteous” could also be translated as “righteous people” or “God-fearing people.”
- Depending on the context, “righteousness” could also be translated with a word or phrase that means “goodness” or “being perfect before God” or “acting in a right way by obeying God” or “doing perfectly good.”
- The term “unrighteous” could simply be translated as “not righteous.”
- Depending on the context, other ways to translate this could include “wicked” or “immoral” or “people who rebel against God” or “sinful.”
- The phrase “the unrighteous” could be translated as “unrighteous people.”
- The term “unrighteousness” could be translated as “sin” or “evil thoughts and actions” or “wickedness.”
- If possible, it is best to translate this in a way that shows its relationship to “righteous, righteousness.”
- Ways to translate “upright” could include “acting rightly” or “one who acts rightly” or “following God’s laws” or “obedient to God” or “behaving in a way that is right.”
- The term “uprightness” could be translated as “moral purity” or “good moral conduct” or “rightness.”
- The phrase “the upright” could be translated as “people who are upright” or “upright people.”

(See also: [evil](#), [faithful](#), [good](#), [holy](#), [integrity](#), [just](#), [law](#), [law](#), [obey](#), [pure](#), [righteous](#), [sin](#), [unlawful](#))

Bible References:

- Deuteronomy 19:16
- Job 1:8
- Psalms 37:30
- Psalms 49:14
- Psalms 107:42
- Ecclesiastes 12:10-11
- Isaiah 48:1-2
- Ezekiel 33:13
- Malachi 2:6
- Matthew 6:1
- Acts 3:13-14
- Romans 1:29-31
- 1 Corinthians 6:9
- Galatians 3:7
- Colossians 3:25
- 2 Thessalonians 2:10
- 2 Timothy 3:16
- 1 Peter 3:18-20
- 1 John 1:9
- 1 John 5:16-17

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:2** But Noah found favor with God. He was a **righteous** man, living among wicked people.
- **4:8** God declared that Abram was **righteous** because he believed in God's promise.
- **17:2** David was a humble and **righteous** man who trusted and obeyed God.
- **23:1** Joseph, the man Mary was engaged to, was a **righteous** man.
- **50:10** Then the **righteous** ones will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God their Father.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0205, H1368, H2555, H3072, H3474, H3476, H3477, H3483, H4334, H4339, H4749, H5228, H5229, H5324, H5765, H5766, H5767, H5977, H6662, H6663, H6664, H6665, H6666, H6968, H8535, H8537, H8549, H8552, G00930, G00940, G04580, G13410, G13420, G13430, G13440, G13450, G13460, G21180, G37160, G37170

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Referenced in: [Job 25 General Notes](#)

sin, sinful, sinner, sinning

Definition:

The term "sin" refers to actions, thoughts, and words that are against God's will and laws. Sin can also refer to not doing something that God wants us to do.

- Sin includes anything we do that does not obey or please God, even things that other people don't know about.
- Thoughts and actions that disobey God's will are called "sinful."
- Because Adam sinned, all human beings are born with a "sinful nature," a nature that that controls them and causes them to sin.
- A "sinner" is someone who sins, so every human being is a sinner.
- Sometimes the word "sinners" was used by religious people like the Pharisees to refer to people who didn't keep the law as well as the Pharisees thought they should.
- The term "sinner" was also used for people who were considered to be worse sinners than other people. For example, this label was given to tax collectors and prostitutes.

Translation Suggestions:

- The term "sin" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "disobedience to God" or "going against God's will" or "evil behavior and thoughts" or "wrongdoing."
- To "sin" could also be translated as to "disobey God" or to "do wrong."
- Depending on the context "sinful" could be translated as "full of wrongdoing" or "wicked" or "immoral" or "evil" or "rebellious against God."
- Depending on the context the term "sinner" could be translated with a word or phrase that means "person who sins" or "person who does wrong things" or "person who disobeys God" or "person who disobeys the law."
- The term "sinners" could be translated by a word or phrase that means "very sinful people" or "people considered to be very sinful" or "immoral people."
- Ways to translate "tax collectors and sinners" could include "people who collect money for the government, and other very sinful people" or "very sinful people, including (even) tax collectors."
- Make sure the translation of this term can include sinful behavior and thoughts, even those that other people don't see or know about.
- The term "sin" should be general, and different from the terms for "wickedness" and "evil."

(See also: disobey, [evil](#), flesh, [tax collector](#))

Bible References:

- 1 Chronicles 9:1-3
- 1 John 1:10
- 1 John 2:2
- 2 Samuel 7:12-14
- Acts 3:19
- Daniel 9:24
- Genesis 4:7
- Hebrews 12:2
- Isaiah 53:11
- Jeremiah 18:23
- Leviticus 4:14
- Luke 15:18
- Matthew 12:31

- Romans 6:23
- Romans 8:4

Examples from the Bible stories:

- **3:15** God said, "I promise I will never again curse the ground because of the evil things people do, or destroy the world by causing a flood, even though people are **sinful** from the time they are children."
- **13:12** God was very angry with them because of their **sin** and planned to destroy them.
- **20:1** The kingdoms of Israel and Judah both **sinned** against God. They broke the covenant that God made with them at Sinai.
- **21:13** The prophets also said that the Messiah would be perfect, having no **sin**. He would die to receive the punishment for other people's **sin**.
- **35:1** One day, Jesus was teaching many tax collectors and other **sinner**s who had gathered to hear him.
- **38:5** Then Jesus took a cup and said, "Drink this. It is my blood of the New Covenant that is poured out for the forgiveness of **sins**."
- **43:11** Peter answered them, "Every one of you should repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that God will forgive your **sins**."
- **48:8** We all deserve to die for our **sins**!
- **49:17** Even though you are a Christian, you will still be tempted to **sin**. But God is faithful and says that if you confess your **sins**, he will forgive you. He will give you strength to fight against **sin**.

Word Data:

- Strong's: H0817, H0819, H2398, H2399, H2400, H2401, H2402, H2403, H2408, H2409, H5771, H6588, H7683, H7686, G02640, G02650, G02660, G02680, G03610, G37810, G39000, G42580

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Referenced in: [Introduction to Job](#)

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